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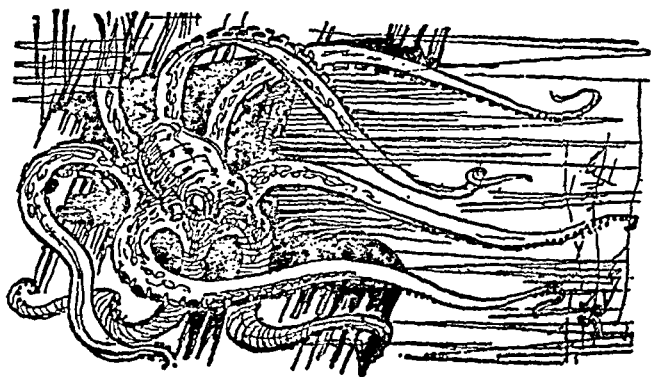
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MODERN ADVENTURE

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The Jungle is Neutral

F. SPENCER CHAPMAN, D.S.O.

This extract, taken from Colonel Chapman's story of the Resistance during the Japanese invasion and occupation of Malaya, is chosen to illustrate what the author calls the "armed neutrality" of the jungle. After reading the account which follows—certainly after reading the whole story—one might well consider this a perfect example of understatement.

The journey described took place in January, 1943, and is typical of what happened to the "stay-behind parties". Plans had been made in August, 1941, for the organization of these parties whose rôle would be to supply intelligence and, in the event of their being overrun by the enemy, to operate against his lines of communication; they would also organize sabotage and anti-Japanese propaganda and assist raiding parties sent in from unoccupied areas. But this scheme was not proceeded with until the Japanese had landed at Kota Bharu in December 1941, when as Colonel Chapman says, "it was far too late for the plan to be effective". The author, however, spent almost three and a half years in the Malayan jungle with a few fellow officers, much of the time being spent in co-operating with Chinese guerillas.

My experience is that the life of the British private soldier accidentally left behind in the Malayan jungle was only a few months, while the average N.C.O., being more intelligent, might last a year or even longer. To them the jungle seemed predominantly hostile, being full of man-eating tigers, deadly fevers,

venomous snakes and scorpions, natives with poisoned darts, and a host of half-imagined nameless terrors. They were unable to adapt themselves to a new way of life and a diet of rice and vegetables; in this green hell they expected to be dead within a few weeks—and as a rule they were. The other school of thought, that the jungle teems with wild animals, fowls, and fish which are simply there for the taking, and that luscious tropical fruits—paw-paw, yams, breadfruit and all that, drop from the trees, is equally misleading. The truth is that the jungle is neutral. It provides any amount of fresh water, and unlimited cover for friend as well as foe—an armed neutrality, if you like, but neutrality nevertheless. It is the attitude of mind that determines whether you go under or survive. "There is nothing, either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." The jungle itself is neutral.

The first night found us beside the Sungei Sempan. We camped on a sandbank several feet above the water-line, as it was the only more or less level place we could find. When we undressed to bathe in the river, we found many bloated leeches stuck to various parts of our bodies. The theory is that leeches should not be pulled off, as their teeth stay in and fester; they should be removed by touching them with salt, tobacco, a solution of areca nut, or a cigarette-end. My experience is that the wounds bleed just as much and are just as likely to go septic however they are removed.

The rain continued, and with some difficulty we managed to make a fire. Harvey had said that bamboo, however wet, will always burn; but this is true only when you have once kindled a fire and I had yet to learn that one must always take a piece of rubber or resin to start the fire. Since our packs were so heavy, we ate up as much of the tinned rations as we could. We then cut a pile of branches to sleep on and made a lean-to shelter out of our three ground-sheets. The rain was coming down harder than ever and we went to bed soaking wet and very miserable.

During the night it rained very heavily indeed and the river rose so rapidly that, finding ourselves on an island, we had to strike camp and cross a roaring torrent to the bank, where we sat shivering disconsolately until daylight.

Next day was purgatory. We wasted half a box of matches before we could persuade the sodden bamboo to light; then it started to rain again and we gave up the attempt to dry our clothes. We now climbed out of the river valley and set a course due west, making for a col half-way between Gunong Liang (6,341 feet) and Gunong Semangko which, at 3,985 feet, is the lowest point in that section of the Main Range watershed.

I was now to learn that navigation in thick mountainous jungle is the most difficult in the world—and I had always rather fancied myself at map reading and finding my way in all types of country from Greenland to Australia. In the first place, it is quite impossible to find out where you are on the map: the limit of our visibility is fifty to a hundred yards, and even if you are on some steep hill-side, where a small landslide has opened up a window through which you can catch a glimpse of another steep blue tree-clad hill-side, you are none the wiser, as one hill is exactly like another. There *are* no landmarks—and if there were, you could not see them. Another difficulty is that there is no way of judging distance: it took us more than a week to realize we were taking eight hours to travel one mile on the map instead of the three or four miles we imagined, judging by the amount of energy we were expending. Perhaps the greatest impediment to navigation is that, having decided to move in a certain direction, you are quite unable to do so owing to the difficulties of the terrain: we were continually forced off our course by swamps, thickets, precipices, outcrops of rock, and rivers. It was impossible even to follow a ridge unless it was very steep and clearly marked. With such limited visibility it was seldom clear which was the main ridge and we soon found ourselves down in the valley bottom, having inadvertently followed a subsidiary spur. In the end I found it best to follow the line of least resistance as long as

we worked steadily westward; but we very soon had absolutely no idea where we were on the map.

All the third day it poured with rain, and night found us on the top of a ridge about 3,000 feet high. We had not intended to camp so high up, but in the afternoon, to our great delight, we had come across the remains of what had once been a fairly wide path running straight up a ridge to the north-west, and we had made very good time. That evening, by a strange anomaly, we suffered tortures from thirst as we could find no water and for once it had stopped raining. This is the only time I can ever remember being really short of water in the jungle; but during the night it began to rain again and we collected the water in a ground-sheet. That night, although we huddled close together, we suffered so much from the cold that it was almost impossible to sleep. We determined that on the following night we would keep a huge fire burning until dawn.

Next day we followed our ridge up and up until we came to the summit, which appeared to be above the tree-line, though in fact surveyors had probably cut down the vegetation to get a view and the tall trees had never re-established themselves. The last hundred feet were covered with rhododendron scrub, some of which was in flower, and coarse shrubs and moss which were so thick that we clambered over the top of them without touching the ground at all.

From here there was one of the most wonderful views I have ever seen. For the first time I realized the terrifying vastness of the Malayan jungle. In every direction there were tree-clad hills, peak after peak and ridge after ridge, purple at first, then violet and blue, fading at last into the paler blue of the distance. There was no clearing of any sort to be seen and the only sign of human beings was the conspicuous cluster of red bungalows on the top of Fraser's Hill about six miles to the south. By working out back bearings from Fraser's Hill and another peak that I could recognize, I discovered that we were on the summit of Bukit Kubang Babi (or the hill of the wild boar's wallow), 3,999 feet

above sea-level. The track had taken us rather further north than I had intended and I had to work out a new course along a prominent ridge to the south-west.

The satisfaction of being able to fix our position gave us new life, but our optimism was soon shattered. Once again it rained heavily all the afternoon and when we stopped to camp we found that the continual soaking had removed the adhesive tape from the tin containing our matches, which had completely disintegrated. The same thing had happened to our sugar and most of it had disappeared in solution through an overflowing tin, while what was left of our biscuit and canned was a sodden pulp.

Had we known that the journey was still to take us another week we should certainly have turned back. That night we finished the last of the tinned food and for the rest of the journey had only raw oatmeal—of which, fortunately, we had brought a fairly large bag—mixed with water each morning and each evening, and for the last two days we had water alone.

Where we went after leaving our first camp I have no idea, though I tried to keep steadily a line south of west. The going grew worse and worse: sometimes we clambered up hills so steep that we had to hold on to the vegetation with both hands to pull ourselves up, and on the descent had to lower ourselves from branch to branch. The ground was now every kind of thicker—bamboo, cane, fern, grass, and so on. The worst going of all consisted of a narrow trail over a mass of granite boulders half-covered with a mass of roots, so that a false step was liable to send us in the water below. Our packs seemed to get heavier and heavier, and the Tommy-guns nearly drove us down. Though in the morning, dry in the mornings, it rained steadily almost every afternoon and most of the night, so that we were never dry and the wet clothes rubbed away the skin in the most tender parts of our bodies, so that it was agony to rest off again in the evening. Though my boots were as good as new at the beginning of the journey, the beginning and I did not get a single blister on my feet, the

others' footwear rotted away and by the end of the journey had almost completely disintegrated.

We soon developed a regular drill. The man who was in front did not carry a Tommy-gun, but cut a path so that he could just pass through. The second man widened the track and marked the route more clearly by bending saplings down or blazing tree trunks, and the third man merely followed and checked the course with a compass, for, unless he were carefully watched, the leading man might turn through half a circle in a few minutes without being in the least aware of it, as we could not see the sun and there were no landmarks save the interminable tree trunks on which to march. Every half-hour we changed places. Our hands, unused to the continuous hard work of using the *parang* (Malay jungle-knife) and softened by being always wet, blistered terribly; and our clothes as well as our hands and faces were soon lacerated by thorns. Two of us had deep wounds resulting from our lack of skill with the *parang*. We were so bitterly cold at night that we were only too glad to set off the moment it was light enough to travel (about six o'clock) and by three in the afternoon we usually stopped, not only because we were too exhausted to continue, but so that we could rest before it became too cold to sleep. As soon as we stopped, we de-leechesed ourselves, washed away the clotted blood, and then made a leaf shelter for the night. We quickly became adept at this. We used to make a low framework with a sloping roof and lash it firmly in place with vines, then, collecting the largest leaves we could find, we thatched them into the framework of the roof. We then made a huge pile of branches and leaves as a mattress, put on all our clothes, and covered ourselves with our ground-sheets. How we wished that we had brought both sweaters and blankets! When I had made out the list of stores, I had not even thought of including sweaters, as I had always been under the impression that Malaya was a hot country.

While the light was still good, I used to work out the course by dead reckoning from the compass direction we had endeav-

oured to keep and the approximate distance we had covered; and I tried to fit the particular ridges and valleys we had crossed during the day with the endless maze of ridges and valleys shown on the map—but always without success. I tried to preserve my optimism, but in reality I had absolutely no idea where we were.

Before we went to sleep, we used to take it in turn to read aloud from the only book we had brought—C. E. Montague's *The Right Place*, my particular *vade mecum*—and this was the only happy hour of the day. Beneath the ground-sheets we generated a comforting warmth and the book took us away from our present miseries to a far-away world of its own. As darkness closed in, the jungle chorus, which had been hushed during the day, came to life, and was so deafening that we had to raise our voices to be heard against it. Every imaginable species of grasshopper, cicada, and tree-frog tuned its individual contribution—musical, unmusical, rhythmic, or strident—to the cacophonous medley. One made a noise like an alarm clock and fully as loud, others like bicycle bells, cymbals, hunting horns, road drills, fishing reels, the infuriating clicker with which a lecturer asks for his next lantern slide, the brakes of a cart going downhill, or the maddening hum of a bee imprisoned beneath a glass. In each camping place the chorus would vary in nature and intensity, depending upon how high up we were and on our nearness to water. The only bird that disturbed our slumbers was the hornbill, whose loud discordant voice resembles that of a heron. In the daytime we would occasionally hear the extraordinary loud rhythmic beat of their wing pinions and, if there happened to be a break in the tree-tops, we would see the huge black ungainly form, and on its head the fantastic white bony structure from which it gets its name.

One of our chief troubles at night was from insects. In the daytime they did not trouble us much, for there are not nearly so many mosquitoes in the great jungle as in the rubber, or near cultivation in the plains; but at night they bit us severely. Worse even than the bite is the shrill humming that seems to be just

beside your ear. However much you slap your face, the noise soon breaks out again. Far worse than the mosquitoes were the midges—or sand-flies as they are called locally—whose wings made no noise, but whose bite was really a bite and itched like a nettle sting. These were particularly bad in the early morning and often woke us up long before dawn. As a result of the bites we received in the night, our faces would be so enlarged and distorted that in the morning we were almost unrecognizable: often our cheeks were so swollen that the eyes were closed and we could not see until we had bathed them in the cool water of a stream.

The going grew worse instead of better and one of the ridges we crossed was so high and steep that it took us a whole day to climb it; on the top we found stunted scrub and mosses, but unlike the rhododendron summit there was no view here and we still had no idea where we were. We even wondered if the compass were wrong (always the last resort of unskilled travellers) and whether we were wandering north or south along the axis of the Main Range.

By this time—it must have been the ninth or tenth day—our strength was beginning to give out and we had only a small amount of oatmeal left. Both Harvey and I were very worried about Sartin: he rarely spoke and was behaving strangely. We did not think he would be able to carry on much longer. Harvey himself, normally large and rather heavily built, had lost so much weight that he looked quite slight and thin, and had taken in six holes on his belt; Sartin said pathetically he was not used to this sort of thing—implying that Harvey and I were in the habit of making similar little trips! I was still feeling the after-effects of malaria and was not going really well, but the stimulus and responsibility of leadership gave me additional strength and I think I seemed less exhausted than I was. Harvey, as jungle expert, said that he thought we ought to go back at once before it was too late. Although, realizing that none of us would ever willingly make this journey again, we had for some days given

up cutting a wide track, he still thought we could follow our trail back. I was determined to go on: I still had faith in my navigation and knew we must be very near the western edge of the mountains. The words of Macbeth seemed particularly apt:

I am in blood

Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

It would be so disheartening to have to retrace our steps that I dreaded such an attempt far more than the unknown dangers ahead. Also Frank Vanrenan and his party were waiting for us and, if we were to return now, it would be months before we could reach Tanjong Malim either by trying this journey again with better equipment or by walking or cycling round by road—and by then the war would be over. Sartin, on being asked his opinion, said that either course would be equally disastrous, but in any case he did not think he could go on much longer—and that was truer than he realized. "There is nothing, either good or bad, but thinking makes it so"—and Sartin was a regular soldier, though rather an exceptional one. Harvey and I were quite certain that if it were absolutely necessary, as long as we had plenty of water—and there was certainly no lack of that—we could carry on for another week, though we should cover less and less ground each day as our strength ebbed. So we went on.

That night we finished our oatmeal. To lighten our loads I suggested that we should dump one of the Tommy-guns and possibly return for it later. Sartin's whole training rebelled instantly at such an idea and, rather ashamed of myself, I apologized for the suggestion.

The next day, January 28th, and the eleventh day of our journey, on the top of a high ridge we found signs of men having once been there. The trees had been blazed, though some years before; we found an empty beer bottle, and there were unmistakable vestiges of a track running down a long spur to the

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outh-west. We followed it for some time, stopping and casting to left and right whenever we were in doubt, until at last it became a definite path. By this time it was dark and we had to camp. It was quite extraordinary what a good influence this ray of hope had on our spirits and strength. Instead of progressing in gloomy and resigned silence, we now talked and whistled, and went at twice the speed.

Next morning we were ready to start the very moment it was light enough to find the path, and going downhill steeply we soon reached a wide stream where there were the remains of a dam at the head of a pipe-line.

This was the Bernam river; we had come down the long spur between this stream and its tributary, the Sungei Lempong. The odds against striking a line running parallel to our course after such a journey are so great that it must be considered a miracle of good fortune rather than good navigation. Had we been a mile or two further north or south, where the mountains continue much further westward, we should probably not have had the strength to get through.

Beside the pipe-line there was an excellent track with naked footmarks along it of recent date. The pipe-line ran steadily westward, traversing in and out of the hill and crossing ravines on crazy scaffolding. As soon as we came out of the jungle into an open patch of ground where the trees had been felled, we took off our clothes and basked in the warm sunshine. It was astonishing to see how much weight we had lost in a mere twelve days: our bones stuck out everywhere; our skin, except where it was mottled with the purple spots of hundreds of leech-bites, was a sickly yellow; our clothes were in ragged tatters, and our hands, knees, and faces were covered with a network of cuts and thorn scratches. As we lay in the sun, we watched the antics of a gibbon—*wah-wah* as the Malays call them—swinging himself from branch to branch with his long arms, and I realized that this was the only animal, or even sign of an animal, that we had seen on the whole journey.



(Above) The Main Place of mountain climbing for the I - P - T. The
 outlet of a Mole - Kannon.



Half-way down the pipe-line we met a party of men, the foremost of whom wore khaki uniform and carried a double-barrelled shotgun. For a horrid moment I thought they were Japanese; and then I was sure they were Gurkhas for the leader had pronounced Mongolian features, far paler skin than the average Malay, and wore a wide-brimmed felt hat. They turned out, however, to be Malays, whose job it was to look after the pipe-line. They were very friendly indeed and took us back to their *kampong* (village), which lay a short distance to the south.

Malay *kampongs*, with their thatched houses on stilts, their fruit trees, coconut palms, hibiscus flowers, and vivid green paddy-fields, are always attractive; but after this nightmare journey we seemed to be in very heaven as we lay on the soft grass in the sun, eating bananas and pineapple, and watching brightly coloured bee-eaters and bulbuls hawking for flies overhead. Soon we had a magnificent curry with chicken, eggs, fish, and several vegetables. We were disappointed to find how little we could eat, as our stomachs seemed to have shrunk to nothing. The Malays could give us no news of the rest of our party, but they said that a great many British soldiers, many of them in the last stages of exhaustion, had passed southward on the edge of the jungle, but that they had not dared to go outside the jungle for some time as they were terrified both of the Japs and the Chinese. We were filled with excitement at the near prospect of joining Vanrenan's party so, after a Malay cheroot and several cups of warm sweet coffee, we returned to the pipe-line. To reach it we had to climb a steep hill; much to our surprise we found that the strength seemed to have deserted our legs, and we had to stop and rest every minute.

Just as the pipe-line left the jungle, it descended very steeply for several hundred feet and at the top of this slope was an *atap* (thatched) hut. Inside it we found a gas-proof cape, some other odds and ends of British army equipment, and an empty whisky bottle. Somehow this seemed a bad omen, and for the first time

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we wondered if anything could have gone wrong with Vanrenan's party.

We descended the steep hill and followed the footpath along the edge of open tin-tailing ground to Leu Kim's *kongsi*-house (literally company-house) a mile down the valley. The old man was out, but his womenfolk gave us coffee and sweet cakes while they sent a boy to look for him. We must have looked the most awful desperadoes with our swollen features, emaciated bodies, twelve days' beard, and scarred hands and faces. At first the Chinese were so terrified that they started to hurry the children into the jungle which came right up to the back of the house. When they discovered we were Englishmen and that one of us spoke Malay, their curiosity overcame their fear; but in answer to our questions about Vanrenan, they maintained an impassive countenance. We began to fear the worst.

The *kongsi*-house was a remarkable building. It had a framework of wooden beams and was walled and roofed with plaited *ataps*. It was about sixty feet long, forty feet wide, and twenty-five feet high; up to a height of six feet it was divided into : number of partitions like loose boxes, some ten feet square, in each of which one family lived, so that the population of the whole house must have been about a hundred, including an extraordinary number of children.

At last Leu Kim returned with his eldest son, Abang (Malay for elder brother), who spoke quite good English. Although I had spent an hour or two with Leu Kim only a month before, he was unable to recognize me and I had to relate various circumstances of our conversation to convince him of my identity. He was then most astonished to find that I had come back.

His story was very incoherent and it was some time before we could make any sense of it; but it appeared that as soon as the stores had arrived on January 5th, Vanrenan, Hembry, Graham and Ah Lam, assisted by a large gang of coolies provided by Leu Kim and Lee Fee, had started to move them into the edge of the jungle. Their plan was to get the cases out of sight of the ro-

and bicycle-path as soon as possible, and later to carry them up to the hide-out further into the jungle. On the following afternoon, when half the stores had been moved, a Chinese rushed up the side road shouting, "The Japs are coming! The Japs are coming! They have already reached Tanjong Malim and are at this moment coming up here." This rumour proved to be entirely untrue, but such was the prevalent state of panic and uncertainty that the coolies disappeared within a few seconds and Vanrenan's party, hastily collecting their Tommy-guns and a few essentials, hid in the jungle. When it came on to rain they went up the pipe-line and spent the night in the *atap* hut there.

Next morning at dawn they returned to the stores to find that every single packing-case had disappeared—not only those outside but the ones that had already been hidden in the jungle. There was no sign of the Japanese nor of the coolies. Vanrenan then sought out Leu Kim, who was in tears, and who told him that, as some of the cases had been broken open, the coolies knew that they contained food and tobacco. During the night, he said, Lee Fee's coolies had returned and, unknown to Leu Kim, had carried off all the stores into the jungle. Leu Kim and Vanrenan started to search, but not a single case was left; even the W./T. equipment and bicycles, which had been put under cover in a deserted *atap* hut, had completely disappeared. On going over to Lee Fee's *kongsi*-house, they found that it was empty and tracks showed that its occupants had all taken to the jungle.

Vanrenan, finding himself without stores and apparently deserted by his leader, had no option but to set off through the jungle to try to join up with the retreating British forces. About January 10th, Leu Kim thought, Vanrenan and his party said good-bye to him and set off up the pipe-line into the jungle.

South Col

WILFRID NOYCE

South Col is complementary to Sir John Hunt's book, *The Ascent of Everest*. As Wilfrid Noyce says, the book gives not "the collective, but the personal story, as it cannot be given in lectures, and certainly not in the expedition film". He remarks that very few books of Himalayan travel give the "inside story" of a man's life at high altitudes and at the end of each book trifling questions persist: "What does it feel like washing up? Did he ever change his underpants? . . . And at lower levels it is the same story. The smell of the Sherpas, the sensation of hunger jumbled with the aesthetic joy of peak-gazing, bathes after dusty plods, the talk with the wizened lama; these are all an intensely personal experience and must be described in personal terms, or let us say in terms of personality." This is what he sets out to do in *South Col*.

I have said that for me, and I think for most of us, Everest as a personality had given place to Everest as a thing, upon which we as persons operated. We were too close. Even so the Lilliputians must have recognized Gulliver much better from afar than when they stood upon his chest. Incapable, moreover, at that height, of interest in much more than one thing at a time, we were too concerned with our own movements and sufferings, our camps and co-ordination, to think, except at rare moments, of the mountain creature beyond.

Thus my diary: "May 25th. Nose a little less blocked and unpleasant last night. A very clear day, wind seems to have

dropped. Is this the summit day? They could scarce have better. Climbing out, just caught a big avalanche from West Shoulder cliffs. It sliced off like a great piece of cake, disappeared round rock edge, reappeared as smoke which spread across the whole Cwm." In fact, of course, it was not summit day. The party had, the afternoon before, pitched the South Col camp with terrible difficulty. They were very tired. Two tents which should have taken five minutes needed, in the wind reigning, an hour and a half. Balu had given up, his main use being to act as ballast, so that the pyramid was not blown away while the others tried to pitch it. It was an exhausting job after the exhausting climb, perhaps the nastiest experience of the whole expedition. No wonder they lay low on the 25th.

On the 24th Mike Ward had first murmured to me the magic scientific words "alveolar test". This medical rite appeared to involve taking samples of air at the bottom of the human lungs by getting the patient to breathe out suddenly into glass tubes, which would then be sealed off. Mike did not know if these had been successfully taken as high as 24,000 feet. Would somebody like to come up and try with him?

It was a tempting offer, but what of the third attempt, supposing it were needed? I was concerned with the organization of this, though at present nobody seemed to have the energy to think much about it. There was Griff, being allowed to experiment away with a precious oxygen cylinder which we might need for that third attempt. It was absurd, but equally difficult to see immediately why he should not, for it all seemed very remote. I would probably keep my strength better, in case the attempt were needed, down here, since Griff congratulated us on being just below the height at which high-altitude deterioration sets in. And yet—what could I do here? I had with great labour written an article which I had not the mental energy to copy out. I liked climbing with Mike. Why not go up?

We planned to be off early, and rose at 5.15 on the 26th. But

we did not step out till 7.15, with a very sluggish Pasang Dawa, commissioned to carry our gear. At V, reached in an hour, Mike was of the opinion that I was leading too fast for the Sherpa. There was no alternative but to invite him to take over. It was a wily manœuvre, for, as Mike said later, he liked leading because it has the advantage that one sets one's own pace. But I was glad to find, this third time up, that I was on top of myself and better acclimatized. I must say he set a very good pace. Twenty steps and a pause; but this time with greater zeal to go on afterwards. At VII, to our surprise, we saw a movement outside a tent. We were greeted by Changjiu, the local Sherpa who had graded from *dak walla* (postman) because of his extraordinary speed, but who had not acclimatized to this height. George Lowe had left him behind. He accompanied Pasang Dawa down, back to Advance Base, while we settled in to have a little sleep. The air of VII always had this effect, on most of us I think.

We had arrived at 12.30. In the early afternoon we wakened to the sound of voices coming along from the bridge; cheery voices, soon followed by a rope of three striding jauntily along the level: Dawa Thondup again, Ang Norbu and Topkie. All had that day done their second carry to the Col. Though in his late forties, Dawa Thondup, for some time past quite speechless from a throat infection, was as cheerful as if he were walking along the Namche highway. Ang Norbu remained his placid, comforting self; Topkie, a tubby little person, smiled shyly but with obvious excitement. Their account was confused, but it seemed that Tom (Bourdillon) and Charles (Evans) might have reached the top, and that there were others coming down today. We sent them on their journey back to IV.

Towards five we saw the next party descending, very slowly and with halts, across the slopes above the big crevasse. From a good stack of snow blocks outside the tent we made tea, and went out to greet them. Da Namgyal, thin and terribly tired, was being shepherded by the brothers Anullu and Da Tensing, together with Balu who had failed at the Col. It was only now

that I thought how fortunate that medicine has brought us here. We ought not to have needed that excuse to come up in support. Mike examined them. Da Namgyal was suffering utter weariness, together with a blister of frostbite the size of a penny on the little finger, and swollen face and hands. Balu suffered a general crumpling of the man. He was no longer a big, confident creature, but tired like a little child. And he could not face his tiredness.

Meanwhile I examined a note handed to me by Da Tensing.

IMMEDIATE

Wilfrid Noyce

Wilf,

1. Just to tell you that Tom and Charles were seen at about 1 p.m. passing the South Summit *en route* for the top. Great excitement here.

2. I accompanied them with Da Namgyal to 27,500 ft. and left the top camp stores, they may well be carried higher tomorrow by the second support party.

JOHN HUNT

26th May.

Of course our speculation was endless. The Sherpas believed that they had reached the top itself, not realizing that the South Summit, seen from the Col, conceals the summit ridge. It was certain they had climbed 2,700 feet in one morning. All this while we slowly, tediously made soup, then passed the one working Primus to Anullu, who was catering for the party in the pyramid. Soon the wind cut short conversation, rising at evening to fling snow pellets at us across the silvery stretches. We lay, simply contemplating the dirty mugs, watching the light fade from the tent roof as the canvas swelled and sagged before the gusts. Of what does one think? I wondered in which of the tent pockets were the cigarettes, in which the matches; and decided it was too much effort to explore for either.

I wondered whether they were having as much or more wind

on the South Col: the far boom of the "South Col Special" we could hear distinctly. I wondered too what it had been like on the Col, and tried to picture them in wind like this: dazed, muffled figures stumbling about as they struggled with the tents the day before yesterday. "The windiest spot on earth", as the Swiss thought it. How they must have tripped over the rocks, fumbled and fallen at the guys. Then there was their exploit. Tenuous threads of excitement seemed to have been spreading down all day, at the thought of what might be happening overhead. They had reached the South Summit, 28,700 feet. I could only guess the details. I did not know that John and Da Namgyal carried, in fact, 45 lb. to a point 100 feet above the tent used last year by Lambert and Tenzing (a height of 27,350 feet). They turned, very tired, and not helped by the ice which blocked their valves. Meanwhile Tom and Charles on Closed-Circuit went on to the South Summit . . . perhaps had even reached the Summit.

Then I mustered mentally the jobs that could be grouped into one climb out, to save two efforts: a stumble round to the Sherpas, a hacking of snow blocks for tomorrow, body unsteady in the wind, the arrangement of my sack as pillow. There remained the last breathless tussle of the sleeping-bag and the hitching of down clothing, which would try to stop the bag coming above the waist. For we wore our down clothes in bed, to save weight by having only one sleeping-bag. At last I was in. I lay, chin up, with only an occasional wriggle and puff to get more comfortable. The wind blew on. . . .

The night continued gusty. Only at 8.20 in the morning I climbed out, thinking that the Sherpas would have started the big cooker, but they had not. They had left it out in the snow, and it took me an hour to get it working, having had to refill it too. This last was an exasperating job always, with the morning frost shadow still on us, the breeze tickling through the trousers. Having filled it I must light it. At each move out for snow from my kneeling position I risked upsetting the tottering masses

around the top-heavy cooker itself, films, boots, packets of Knackerboot surmounted by tubes of gluey milk dripping at the neck, my books and diary—and all resting on clothes, sleeping-bags, half-deflated Li-Los.

Mike went out to examine the Sherpas. For Da Namgyal and Balu the prescription was "Go down lower". The frostbite would be well in a fortnight, and Da Namgyal, still very sorry for himself, looked reassured. A stiff breeze rattled on, but at long last a very slow rope of four disappeared over the edge, and we settled to work. There were only two jobs, but they took the remainder of the morning. Mike and I had attended the same preparatory school, St. Edmund's, at Hindhead, and I was obstinately determined to write a letter-card announcing that we had had the highest dinner held by associates of that school on record; even if the menu was no more than soup and Ryvita smeared with condensed milk. Our next job was the alveolar test which was the prime excuse for our being here.

From his sack Mike drew out a series of glass tubes and globules which he handled with all the reverent care of an expert in Dresden china. These were accompanied by rubber piping and business-like forceps. The plan appeared to be to catch the air at the bottom of the lungs unaware, so to speak. One must breathe out normally, without effort; then suddenly, with immense force, puff out down a tube. Here the forceps came in, for before the air had time to retreat, the poor thing was caught in the glass at the end of the tube, trapped and sealed off all ready to be borne back to London and analysed. I did one successful puff, Mike two. I felt that I had at last worthily served the cause of science.

At one we warmed lemonade and ate biscuits. Should we stay on? There was not much to eat up here, hardly enough for the others when they returned. We packed up slowly. It seemed harder and harder to leave, therefore we delayed the moment by wandering in turn up the serac side to view the upper slopes. Suddenly Mike gave a cry. Four small figures were descending

below the Spur, very slowly and sitting down frequently. Thank Heaven, we had an excuse for staying to receive them! We unpacked. I think neither of us realized at the time (the effect of height), that had we not seen them, it would have been still more important to stay.

We sat fiddling in the tent. At what time should we get tea going? Every now and then we peeped out, straining after the sound of voices. At three I put on snow for water, but it was after four before they appeared, labouring like yesterday's party across the slope above. I left Mike at the stove and walked slowly along the level to the crevasse bridge fifty yards to the right. They were coming down the couloir, now the bulky leading figure turned towards me over the bridge. It was John. He was soon across the downward sloping bridge, and Tom followed. I was shaking hands with John. Suddenly, over his right shoulder, a blue flash streaked downward against the grey curtain of ice beyond. It was the third of the four figures apparently taking a header straight into the crevasse that they were crossing! And indeed a header he was taking. Exhausted, Ang Temba had put his foot carelessly into a step and thrown his weight over it, stumbled and gone head over heels. Charles, last on the rope, held him. It had been the reaction of a skilful mountaineer to hold him so, and then hitch the rope round his axe. But he could do no more. Ang Temba was safe. Safe but helpless. John and Tom, the first two, looked. They were more than tired, Tom breathing heavily into the oxygen apparatus that had got him down from the Col.

I looked at the lumpy wedge of snow forming the bridge. It was broad and soft, and Ang Temba was upside down against the side of the parapet, as it were, not dangled in space. If I could scramble out beyond the others I might reach him. I crawled out past them, and I cannot at all remember whether I tied on to their rope or not. I think not. I remember only, in my diary's words, "a strenuous little struggle over space. Charles holds from back, I fish with axe, and heave. Ripped his sack off and carried

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oda-lime canister too early. There had already been evidence of an expedition that wearing Closed-Circuit oxygen for many years had a "de-climatizing" effect. That is to say, if their set had given out suddenly on the summit ridge, they would certainly not have got back. They had lost contact with the outer world. They had returned, after a climb "historic" indeed, if that misused word can be applied to any mountain exploit. The descent had been desperately slow, for then they realized how tired they were. Both had slipped, one after the other; the slips of exhaustion. The third windy night had not helped that tiredness.

Even on the Col John's mind had been busy with plans. Would I go up with Sherpas to support or reinforce the second party, stepping into the breach if one had fallen out?

In the Himalaya pains feared are often not as bad as fear has painted them. So it was the next day, May 29th. We started with the humdrum round of tea, brought by Phu Dorji and enlivened by us with Grape-nuts. Then "getting up". If a god had ever appeared upon the mountain I would have asked him, not to transport me to the summit, but to bear me in a flash past that dreary hour and a half which separates the first push back of the sleeping-bag from the last flick of the rope as I set off. To-day a large worry would be the packing. I had worked it out neatly in my head, but as for minutes of physical time—that was another matter. My personal kit would be divided between myself and one Sherpa, Pasang Phutar, who would also have his own. The other two could carry the high-altitude rations and precious kerosene for the Col. They would be coming down the same day, therefore would need nothing of their own. I must now pack up my own things and complete my dressing. Knowing that I would be going higher, I had come up in neater, general-purpose Lawrie boots, for comfort on the lower Face. But they would not be warm enough for the Col. Ch. Fortunately took the same size, and generously exchanged his

A happy afterthought, I had packed my oxygen mask into the sack at IV, "just in case".

I had determined to keep my hour or so of oxygen for higher up, when I would need it more. I would have, therefore, to carry the apparatus up the glacier section unused. Before nine we were away, with a wave of the axe (more jaunty than my feelings) as we crossed the slope above, overlooking the camp. To my surprise and pleasure, I seemed to have acclimatized. The Sherpas were not treading on my tail as I had feared for certain they would, and I was not panting unpleasantly. I was not enjoying the view either; but breathing seemed far more rhythmic to the pace than twelve days ago, and I was doing twenty to thirty steps without stopping. I was the more surprised, since I expected that demon "high altitude deterioration" to have set about my throat. I did not realize that he rests below a certain level, as is evident from the case of George Lowe. George went up above the Col after nine days on the Face, an awesome feat even with oxygen. So I went on, having my eyes fixed upon the slope that had hardened greatly since the first visit. Only at rests I turned to the horizon. It seemed a fine day for the summit, and my thoughts were busy about the two above. The golden bars silvered to grey against the cloud-banks, but otherwise no veil misted the sky's blue. In the fixed-up rope sections the rope was now secure, though the moves remained delicate in clumsy boots with a weight behind. We moved up to the more level ground of the glacier top.

It was a long time, in and out of unsuspected shelves and valleys of ice, with the feet pressed awkwardly against the bend of snow, before we met the returning party. It was Greg, with Pemba and Ang Nyima, all muffled and panting. Grey told me that Ed and Tenzing had been seen passing the South Summit at nine. Himself, George and Ang Nyima had done the carry yesterday, had left everything for the camp high on the ridge. The summit party had camped, and started out about 6.30 this

morning. We stood loosely in the snow, each putting off the moment of going forward. Greg had been very tired, returning to the Col. "Tell George I'm going better today", he said as they moved off.

It was soon after this that I noticed Ang Dorji going very unsteadily. More frequent became the calls for *aram* (rest), the gestures of head down on axe. His eyes had the unseeing wildness of exhausted men; his mouth hung open with a scum about the lips. We divided part of his load, then bent forward again. I remember well the awkwardness of replacing my oxygen, after I had switched on. The weighty rucksack above the cylinder toppled me over as I swung it back. We were now going more and more slowly, it was more and more clear that the supply, an odd hour's worth at best, would get me very little farther. It was windier today, and colder. I was glad that I had Charles's boots, for nobody dislikes more than I standing about in powder snow, wriggling toes that have lost sensation.

Another halt. Ang Dorji's head dropped even before his body, his eyes had no sight in them. We stood in the snow, in the hope that rest would recover him, and I put on another sweater, another pair of gloves. It looked unlikely that he could go on; a few steps farther he was down again. He must clearly stay. At this point forgotten shafts of sunlight started playing upon the immense slope over which we were making our ant-track; warmth had penetrated our day. I looked up at the rounded skyline crest, seeming deceptively near. We could divide Ang Dorji's load, reach the Col and send Phu Dorji speeding down to accompany Ang Dorji to VII. Pasang Phutar and I would stay up, go higher if need be. I said, "Ang Dorji, wait here." He looked vaguely grateful, lying in the snow, not caring about anything much except rest.

We made another division of loads and went on. But I had underestimated everything, our slowness, my cylinder's capacity, the distance to the Spur's top and the wind's force. It was very soon after we had once more started that my cylinder gave out,

and I knew well what effect that would have on my going. We were not 200 yards from Ang Dorji, when the wind playing about my trouser bottoms hinted to me the danger of his lying there. I knew that I could not leave a man to the risk of that cold. The Spur looked farther than before, the pencilled shadow of the jutting rocks upon snow a more arduous climb. *Phu Dorji nieche jaega* (Phu Dorji will go down). Phu Dorji, tall and piratical of appearance, with orange balaclava and perpetually dirty face, was one of the most reliable. He was well set for the Col, and could have reached it easily. But he took the order without hesitation. A trained Sherpa, he was doing his job, obeying the Sahib's instructions and going down. That, I think, is the attitude of these men. They have come to climbing through load-carrying. Load-carrying is the job and mountaineering a higher-paid carrying job than most. To be among mountains, yes. That is their life, their work. To be on their snow is a different matter, hard work and dangerous at times. Sherpas have been killed on Everest. Therefore Phu Dorji went down, and I do not think he regretted it, for I later gave him the recommendation of a man who had reached the South Col twice. With Tenzing it would have been different.

What of the loads? Phu Dorji had been carrying most of *Ang Dorji's*, which Pasang and I must split. My oxygen hour ~~was~~ over, leaving me at least freer to carry. I leaned the frame ~~against~~ a little rock. Even if I needed oxygen higher, I could not ~~carry~~ that plus a load; and at the moment a load seemed the ~~more~~ important. The event proved that the kerosene was ~~precious~~ indeed, for the South Col was quite without it. The ~~Asian~~ Rations so laboriously heaved and hoisted up remain, ~~most of~~ them, on the Col now. Perhaps they will be useful to ~~somebody~~. But at that time they seemed most important, as of course ~~they~~ might have been. Pasang's infinite sack took much; ~~mine~~ ~~was~~ not fit all that I wanted, and I went on armed with one uncomfortably over each shoulder. Pasang ~~was~~ carrying over 50 lb., myself something over 40.

Before we had taken a few steps Phu Dorji had rejoined his friend. The two were resting, then making off, slowly, down the dotted line which crossed the slope, towards the upper snout of glacier. The first four steps: that showed how slowly we were going. At very first my impression was, "Well, I've defeated it. Here I am chugging up all right." But that was only for a few steps. A dead weight, two long leaden arms, began dragging at my two shoulders. Curious things were beginning to happen to my breath, to my mind. As in a dream I was back at the end of the cross-country course at Charterhouse. I was spattered with mud, breathing hoarsely, exhausted. Now somebody was asking me to run the thing again. No, it was too much!

It is usual with me, as I think with many climbers, to be two people at once on a climb, particularly when I am alone. Here I was in several senses alone. One-half watches and criticises the fumbings of the incompetent other, and is itself removed and remote from the physical conflict. In high climbing this schizophrenic condition becomes more pronounced, as I noticed on Pauhunri in 1945. I believe that such a state led to Smythe's strange act on Everest in 1933, when at 28,000 feet, alone, he broke a piece of mint cake and turned to give half to his supposed companion. On the Spur one-half of me hovered airily above the slope, wondering why in the name of everything it was tied to this grinding, panting creature. Even, as we turned left towards the crest, it admired the hanging wonder of Everest's final pyramid, now clear of snow plume. The rest of me laboured painfully, gasped and groaned; abominated the horrible hole that the sacks seemed to be making in the small of my back; pleaded with the superior partner, "I can't, I can't go faster"; and yet felt a thrill of subcutaneous joy not to be going slower.

At longest last we were nearing the flatter top, on shelving, jumbled rock splinters. Suddenly a cry from behind. It was Pasang, pointing with his axe. I looked up, and in my condition of the moment it seemed by no means surprising, indeed com-



Everest from the air (the arrow points to the South Col)

monplace, that two small figures should be blotting the white diamond slope below the South Summit of Everest. From the Geneva Spur the South Summit, hiding the main summit, is a most queenly mountain, a mountain in its own right. The left skyline descends in a curving plunge, to divide itself between west and south ridges. To the right, invisible from the Cwm, the south-east ridge of the pyramid swings in one graceful sweep, then bulge, down towards the right-hand edge of the Col, where it ends in an abrupt little rock tower. The steep slope immediately below the South Summit appears as a dazzling jewel of snow. Upon this, stepping down, the two black figures were venturing. They looked for all the world like climbers descending from Snowdon's top at Easter. So clear is the air, they seemed no smaller than such climbers on such a day from near the top of Snowdon's P-y-G track. And so bemused was I, that the dramatic suddenness of this sight, with all its possibilities, stirred only a very small layer of me. "That's good, they may have done it." And I pushed on for the next three steps.

All the same, the sight of them, with its presentiment of good, was a great good to our dragging bodies. It still seemed another age before we were again treading snow, over 26,000 feet high on the bald crown of the Spur, and looking down at the "Uniformity of Barrenness", as Dr. Johnson would certainly have described the South Col plateau. This time, however, it was enlivened by standing tents beside the wind-torn tatters: the yellow pyramid, the little orange "blister" and a two-man abode. From above we could see the fabric ballooning before the wind. All the way up we had met heavier gusts than last time, for conditions vary from day to day. And yet the ridge above looked far calmer, no longer shrouded by the blank streaming mists that had blotted out further views. This time the blue hills of Tibet danced with their coronets of snow against the brown backcloth of plain to the right. They looked very distant, in another world from ours. My eye came back, to a figure moving slowly between the tents.

We crunched down to the level; swung rucksacks off and paused for a moment or two. Now to bend down, to face the wriggle through the funnel and into the flapping pyramid. A swimming motion with the arms and I was lying on the floor. But it was some moments before I sat up and looked around. I have never seen so chaotic an interior. The ground-sheet was ripped with great triangular cuts, and these showed the boulders among which the tent was pitched. Through a tear in one of the side walls—the wind's work, George said—the air entered sharply, pulling at the fabric to squeeze more of itself inside. All over the floor were littered the remains of high-altitude rations, fragments of cheese and frozen biscuits, mixed up with connecting tubes and oxygen masks, cylinder heads and the occasional carrying frame. Torn paper everywhere. I poked my head outside and pulled in two rucksacks. For Pasang, I cannot remember whether he came too, or whether he retired at once to the "blister".

George Lowe, the figure I had seen, was in with me now. "It looks as if they may have done it. I'm just going to meet them," he said.

When I left the tent to go up too, George was some way on the slope towards the south-east ridge. The two higher figures were hard to see against the black rock bordering the couloir. I plodded over the flat, icy surface of the Col; for no snow is allowed to rest here. Cutting the surface are boulders that are the bone of the mountain. Had that mountain been kind to Ed and Tenzing, towards whom I was heading? A silly question now. Everest was aloof, had no thought for us. Some have seen in the mountain a malignant enemy, interposing icy barriers between man and his desire, beating him with the weapon of wind. But to me, upon that slope, Everest was cold, impersonal as never before. This wind was not here to harry me. It had blown across the South Col long before there were men swarming upon this planet. The alternation of the seasons which allowed me to be here now, the

hot with the cold, monsoon with dominion of frost, these passed in a cycle immeasurably above our Lilliput conflicts. That queen of created masses, the summit, swept up there equally upon its glorious ridges, whether Ed and Tenzing had reached the highest point or no.

George had met them now. They had stopped, rested, then there were three figures coming down the slope towards me. The afternoon mist hung and puffed across the lower reaches, now masking the hills of Tibet, now the stupendous fang of Makalu and its satellites across the way. The lower slopes still hovered gleaming through cloud windows.

I went on. Now they were very near. George was waving his axe.

"They've done it!" He pointed his ice-axe towards the top. But my reaction was disappointing. With the slowness of all motion, my brain refused to receive the impression. It takes time, at that height. The top. That meant Everest climbed, job done. Good—*wonderful*. Now we can go down. No more problems.

Somehow like this my thought went, if thought it can be described. At the back of my heart I knew that, had they failed, I would have been of the third party. But that mattered nothing now. I can certainly remember no disappointment for myself at all. Why should I? Slowly, I began to feel immensely happy, though I realized not a thousandth of the deed's implications. "We" had got up; had done what we came out to do, without accident. And now we could go down, be greeted by our friends, sleep in beds, have hot drinks and an appetite again; leave Everest to the choughs.

A Pattern of Islands

SIR ARTHUR GRIMBLE

The author himself provides the best introduction to this extract. "The Colonial Office appointed me to a cadetship in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate towards the end of 1913. I wanted to become District Officer in the Colonial Administration Service, and serving as a Cadet—which is to say, a probationer—in one British territory or another overseas was the way through to it. I had specially asked to be sent to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands because, scattered in a six-hundred-mile line across the Equator away out in the blue of the Central Pacific, they were still in those days romantically remote from civilization, and this seemed to promise all manner of strange adventures."

Assignment with an Octopus

I certainly should never have ventured out alone for pure sport, armed with nothing but a knife, to fight a tiger-shark in its own element. I am as little ashamed of that degree of discretion as the big-game hunter who takes care not to attack a rhinoceros with a shotgun. The fear I had for the larger kinds of octopus was quite different. It was a blind fear, sick with disgust, unreasoned as a child's horror of darkness. Victor Hugo was the man who first brought it up to the level of my conscious thought. I still remember vividly the impression left on me as a boy of fourteen by that account in *Les Travailleurs de la Mer* of Gilliatt's fight with the

monster that caught him among the rocks of The Douvres. For years after reading it, I tortured myself with wondering how ever I could behave with decent courage if faced with a giant at once so strong and so loathsome. My commonest nightmare of the period was of an octopus-like Presence poised motionless behind me, towards which I dared not turn, from which my limbs were too frozen to escape. But that phase did pass before I left school, and the Thing lay dormant inside me until a day at Tarawa.

Before I reached Tarawa, however, chance gave me a swift glimpse of what a biggish octopus could do to a man. I was wading at low tide one calm evening on the lip of the reef at Ocean Island when a Baanaban villager, back from fishing, brought his canoe to land within twenty yards of where I stood. There was no more than a show of breaking seas, but the water was only knee deep, and this obliged the fisherman to slide overboard and handle his lightened craft over the jagged edge. But no sooner were his feet upon the reef than he seemed to be tied to where he stood. The canoe was washed shorewards ahead of him; while he stood with legs braced, tugging desperately away from something. I had just time to see a tapering, greyish yellow rope curled around his right wrist before he broke away from it. He fell sprawling into the shallow water; the tapered rope flicked writhing back into the foam at the reef's edge. The fisherman picked himself up and nursed his right arm. I had reached him by then. The octopus had caught him with only the tip of one tentacle, but the terrible hold of the few suckers on his wrist had torn the skin whole from it as he wrenched himself adrift.

Portrait of the Octopus

This is not to say that all the varieties of octopus known to the Gilbertese are dangerous to man. Some of them are mere midgets, and very beautiful. Lying face down on a canoe anchored over rocks and sand in Tarawa lagoon, I sometimes used to watch for the smaller kinds through a water-glass.

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allest I saw could have been comfortably spread on the cigarette tin. I noticed that the colours of all the little ones were much according to where they were crawling, from mottled rust-red and brown of coral rock to the clear gold range-brown of sunlit sand speckled with seaweed. From the sight of my top-window, most of them looked as flat as a snake slithering over the bottom, but there was one minute creature that had a habit of standing on its toes. It would constrict its tentacles into a kind of neck where they joined the head and, like a toad, its body so raised, would jig up and down rather like a dancing frog. But what appealed most to my wonder was the way they all swam. A dozen sprawling, lace-like shapes would suddenly gather themselves into stream-lines and shoot upwards, jet-propelled by the marvellous syphon in their heads, like a display of fairy water-rockets. At the top of their flight, they seemed to explode; their tails of trailed tentacles burst outward into shimmering points around their tiny bodies, and they sailed like drifting gossamer stars back to the sea-floor again.

The female octopus anchors her eggs to stalks of weed and c under water. It seems to be a moot point whether she broods in their neighbourhood or not, but I once saw what I took to be a mother out for exercise with five babies. She had a body about the size of a tennis ball and tentacles perhaps a foot long. The length of the small ones, streamlined for swimming, was not more than five inches over all. They were cruising around a coral pinnacle in four feet of water. The big one led, the babies followed six inches behind, in what seemed to be an ordered formation: they were grouped, as it were, around the base of a cone whereof she was the forward-pointing apex.

They cruised around the pinnacle for half a minute or more, and then went down to some small rocks at its base. While the little ones sprawled over the bottom, the mother remained poised above them. It looked to my inexperienced eye exactly as if she was mounting guard over her young. And at that point a big trevall was obliging enough to become the villain of a family drama for

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to sunlight, and the gliding ease of its arms as they reach over the rough rocks fascinates the eye with its deadly grace. You feel that if only the creature would stick to its grub on the bottom, the shocking ugliness of its shape might win your sympathy, as for some poor Caliban in the enchanted garden of the lagoon. But it is no honest grubber in the end. For every one of its kind that you see crawling below you, there are a dozen skulking in recesses of the reef that falls away like a cliff from the edge where you stand watching. When *Octopus Vulgaris* has eaten its fill of the teeming crabs and crayfish, it seeks a dark cleft in the coral face, and anchors itself there with a few of the large suckers nearest to its body. Thus shielded from attack in the rear, with tentacles gathered to pounce, it glares from the shadows, alert for anything alive to swim within striking distance. It can hurl one or all of those whiplashes forward with the speed of dark lightning, and once its scores of suckers, rimmed with hooks for grip on slippery skins, are clamped about their prey, nothing but the brute's death will break their awful hold.

But that very quality of the octopus that most horrifies the imagination, its relentless tenacity, becomes its undoing when a hungry man steps into the picture. The Gilbertese happen to value certain parts of it as food, and their method of fighting it is coolly based upon the one fact that its arms never change their grip. They hunt for it in pairs. One man acts as the bait, his partner as the killer. First, they swim eyes-under at low tide just off the reef, and search the crannies of the submarine cliff for sight of any tentacle that may flicker out for a catch. When they have placed their quarry, they land on the reef for the next stage. The human bait starts the real game. He dives and tempts the lurking brute by swimming a few strokes in front of its cranny, at first little beyond striking range. Then he turns and makes straight for the cranny, to give himself into the embrace of those waiting arms. Sometimes nothing happens. The beast will not always respond to the lure. But usually it strikes.

The partner on the reef above stares down through the pellucid water, waiting for his moment. His teeth are his only weapon. His killing efficiency depends on his avoiding every one of those strangling arms. He must wait until his partner's body has been drawn right up to the entrance of the cleft. The monster inside is groping then with its horny mouth against the victim's flesh, and sees nothing beyond it. That point is reached in a matter of no more than thirty seconds after the decoy has plunged. The killer dives, lays hold of his pinioned friend at arms' length, and jerks him away from the cleft; the octopus is torn adrift from the anchorage of its proximal suckers, and clamps itself the more fiercely to its prey. In the same second, the human bait gives a kick which brings him, with quarry annexed, to the surface. He turns on his back, still holding his breath for better buoyancy, and this exposes the body of the beast for the kill. The killer closes in, grasps the evil head from behind, and wrenches it away from its meal. Turning the face up towards himself, he plunges his teeth between the bulging eyes, and bites down and in with all his strength. That is the end of it. It dies on the instant; the suckers release their hold; the arms fall away; the two fishers paddle with whoops of delighted laughter to the reef, where they string the catch to a pole before going to rout out the next one.

Any two boys of seventeen, any day of the week, will go out and get you half a dozen octopus like that for the mere fun of it. Here lies the whole point of this story. The hunt is, in the most literal sense, nothing but child's play to the Gilbertese.

As I was standing one day at the end of a jetty in Tarawa lagoon, I saw two boys from the near village shouldering a string of octopus slung on a pole between them. I started to wade out in their direction, but before I hailed them they had stopped, planted the carrying-pole upright in a fissure and, leaving it there, swum off the edge for a while with faces submerged, evidently searching for something under water. I had been only a few months at Tarawa, and that was my first near view of an octopus.

hunt. I watched every stage of it from the dive of the human bait to the landing of the dead catch. When it was over, I went up to them. I could hardly believe that in those few seconds, with no more than a frivolous-looking splash or two on the surface, they could have found, caught and killed the creature they were now stringing up before my eyes. They explained the amusing simplicity of the thing.

"There's only one trick the decoy-man must never forget," they said, "and that's not difficult to remember. If he is not wearing the water-spectacles of the Men of Matang, he must cover his eyes with a hand as he comes close to the *kika* (octopus), or the suckers might blind him." It appeared that the ultimate fate of the eyes was not the thing to worry about; the immediate point was that the sudden pain of a sucker clamping itself to an eyeball might cause the bait to expel his breath and inhale sea-water; that would spoil his buoyancy, and he would fail then to give his friend the best chance of a kill.

I Was the Bait

Then they began whispering together. I knew in a curdling flash what they were saying to each other. Before they turned to speak to me again, a horrified conviction was upon me. My damnable curiosity had led me into a trap from which there was no escape. They were going to propose that I should take a turn at being the bait myself, just to see how delightfully easy it was. And that is what they did. It did not even occur to them that I might not leap at the offer. I was already known as a young Man of Matang who liked swimming, and fishing, and laughing with the villagers; I had just shown an interest in this particular form of hunting; naturally, I should enjoy the fun of it as much as they did. Without even waiting for my answer, they gleefully ducked off the edge of the reef to look for another octopus—a fine fat one—*mine*. Left standing there alone, I had another of those visions. . . .

It was dusk in the village. The fishers were home, I saw the cooking-fires glowing orange-red between the brown lodges. There was laughter and shouted talk as the women prepared the evening meal. But the laughter was hard with scorn. "What?" they were saying, "Afraid of a kika? The young Man of Matang? Why, even our boys are not afraid of a kika!" A curtain went down and rose again on the Residency; the Old Man was talking: "A leader? You? The man who funked a schoolboy game? We don't leave your sort in charge of Districts." The scene flashed to my uncles: "Returned empty," they said, "We always knew you hadn't got it in you. Returned empty. . . ."

Of course it was all overdrawn, but one fact was beyond doubt: the Gilbertese reserved all their most ribald humour for physical cowardice. No man gets himself passed for a leader anywhere by becoming the butt of that kind of wit. I decided I would rather face the octopus.

I was dressed in khaki slacks, canvas shoes and a short-sleeved singlet. I took off the shoes and made up my mind to shed the singlet if told to do so; but I was wildly determined to stick to my trousers throughout. Dead or alive, said a voice within me, an official minus his pants is a preposterous object, and I felt I could not face that extra horror. However, nobody asked me to remove anything.

I hope I did not look as yellow as I felt when I stood to take the plunge: I have never been so sick with funk before or since. "Remember, one hand for your eyes," said someone from a thousand miles off, and I dived.

I do not suppose it is really true that the eyes of an octopus shine in the dark; besides, it was clear daylight only six feet down in the limpid water; but I could have sworn the brute's eyes burned at me as I turned in towards his cranny. That dark glow—whatever may have been its origin—was the last thing I saw as I blacked out with my left hand and rose into his clutches. Then, I remember chiefly a dreadful *slimmer* with a *heavenly* power behind it. Something whipped round my left forearm and

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of my neck, binding the two together. In the same flash, something slapped itself high on my forehead, and I felt ang down inside the back of my singlet. My impulse was at it with my right hand, but I felt the whole of that arm ed to my ribs. In most emergencies the mind works with -clear impersonality. This was not even an emergency, for w myself perfectly safe. But my boyhood's nightmare was a me. When I felt the swift constriction of those disgusting s jerk my head and shoulders in towards the reef, my mind at blank of every thought save the beastliness of contact with t squat head. A mouth began to nuzzle below my throat the junction of the collar-bones. I forgot there was anyone o save me. Yet something still directed me to hold my reath.

I was awakened from my cowardly trance by a quick, strong pull on my shoulders, back from the cranny. The cables around me tightened painfully, but I knew I was adrift from the reef. I gave a kick, rose to the surface and turned on my back with the brute sticking out of my chest like a tumour. My mouth was smothered by some flabby moving horror. The suckers felt like hot rings pulling at my skin. It was only two seconds, I suppose, from then to the attack of my deliverer, but it seemed like a century of nausea.

My friend came up between me and the reef. He pounced, pulled, bit down, and the thing was over—for everyone but me. At the sudden relaxation of the tentacles, I let out a great breath, sank and drew in the next under water. It took the united help of both boys to get me, coughing, heaving and pretending to join in their delighted laughter, back to the reef. I had to submit there to a kind of war-dance round me, in which the dead beast was slung whizzing past my head from one to the other. I had a chance to observe then that it was not by any stretch of fancy a giant, but just plain average. That took the bulge out of my budding self-esteem. I left hurriedly for the cover of the jetty

The Calling of the Porpoise

It was common rumour in the Gilbert Islands that certain local clans had the power of porpoise-calling; but it was rather like the Indian rope-trick; you never met anyone who had actually witnessed the thing. If I had been a reasonably plump young man, I might never have come to see what I did see on the beach of Butaritari lagoon. But I was skinny. It was out of sheer pity for my poor thin frame that old Kitiona set his family porpoise-caller working. We were sitting together one evening in his canoe shed by the beach, and he was delivering a kind of discourse on the beauty of human fatness.

"A chief of chiefs," he said, "is recognized by his shape. He is fleshy from head to foot. But his greatest flesh is his middle; when he sits, he is based like a mountain upon his sitting place; when he stands, he swells out in the midst, before and behind, like a porpoise." It seemed that in order to maintain that noble bulge a high chief simply must have a regular diet of porpoise-meat; if he didn't, he would soon become lean and bony like a commoner or a white man. The white man was doubtless of chiefly race, thought Kitiona, but his figure could hardly be called beautiful. "And you," he added, looking me up and down with affectionate realism, "are in truth the skinniest white man ever seen in these islands. You sit upon approximately no base at all."

I laughed (heartily I hope) and asked what he thought could be done about that. "You should eat porpoise-flesh," he said simply, "then you too would swell in the proper places." That led me to inquire how I might come by a regular supply of the rare meat. The long and the short of his reply was that his own kinsmen in Kuma village, seventeen miles up-lagoon, were the hereditary porpoise-callers of the High Chiefs of Butaritari and Makin-Meang. His first cousin was a leading expert at the game; he could put himself into the right kind of dream on demand. His spirit went out of his body in such a dream; it sought out the porpoise-folk in their home under the western horizon and

invited them to a dance, with feasting, in Kuma village. If he spoke the words of the invitation aright (and very few had the secret of them) the porpoise would follow him with cries of joy to the surface.

Having led them to the lagoon entrance, he would fly forward to rejoin his body and warn the people of their coming. It was quite easy for one who knew the way of it. The porpoise never failed to arrive. Would I like some called for me? After some rather idle shilly-shallying, I admitted that I would; but did he think I should be allowed to see them coming? Yes, he replied, that could probably be arranged. He would talk to his kinsman about it. Let me choose a date for the calling and, if the Kuma folk agreed, his canoe would take me to the village. We fixed on a day early in January, some weeks ahead, before I left him.

No further word came from Kitiona until his big canoe arrived one morning to collect me. There was not a breath of wind, so sailing was out of the question. The sun was white-hot. It took over six hours of grim paddling to reach our destination. By the time we got there, I was cooked like a prawn and wrapped in gloom. When the fat, friendly man who styled himself the High Chief's hereditary porpoise-caller came waddling down the beach to greet me, I asked irritably when the porpoise would arrive. He said he would have to go into his dream first, but thought he could have them there for me by three or four o'clock. Please, though, he added firmly, would I be careful to call them, from now on, *only* "our friends from the west". The other name was tabu. They might not come at all if I said it aloud. He led me as he spoke to a little hut screened with newly plaited coconut leaves, which stood beside his ordinary dwelling. Alone in there, he explained, he would do his part of the business. Would I honour his house by resting in it while he dreamed? "Wait in peace now," he said when I was installed, "I go on my journey", and disappeared into the screened hut.

Kuma was a big village in those days: its houses stretched for half a mile or more above the lagoon beach. The dreamer's hut

lay somewhere near the centre of the line. The place was dead quiet that afternoon under its swooning palms. The children had been gathered in under the thatches. The women were absorbed in plaiting garlands and wreaths of flowers. The men were silently polishing their ceremonial ornaments of shell. Their friends from the west were being invited to a dance, and everything they did in the village that day was done to maintain the illusion.

Even the makings of a feast lay ready piled in baskets beside the houses. I could not bring myself to believe that the people expected just nothing to come of all this careful business.

But the hot hours dragged by, and nothing happened. Four o'clock passed. My faith was beginning to sag under the strain when a strangled howl burst from the dreamer's hut. I jumped round to see his cumbrous body come hurtling head first through the torn screens. He sprawled on his face, struggled up, and staggered into the open, a slobber of saliva shining on his chin. He stood awhile clawing at the air and whining on a queer high note like a puppy's. Then words came gulping out of him: "*Teirake! Teirake!* (Arise! Arise!) . . . They come, they come! . . . Our friends from the west . . . They come! . . . Let us go down and greet them." He started at a lumbering gallop down the beach.

A roar went up from the village, "They come, they come!" I found myself rushing helter-skelter with a thousand others into the shallows, bawling at the top of my voice that our friends from the west were coming. I ran behind the dreamer; the rest converged on him from north and south. We strung ourselves out, line abreast, as we stormed through the shallows. Everyone was wearing the garlands woven that afternoon. The farther out we got, the less the clamour grew. When we stopped, breast deep, fifty yards from the reef's edge, a deep silence was upon us; and so we waited.

I had just dipped my head to cool it when a man near me yelped and stood pointing; others took up his cry, but I could make out nothing for myself at first in the splintering glare of the

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sun on the water. When at last I did see them, everyone was screaming hard; they were pretty near by then, gambolling towards us at a fine clip. When they came to the edge of the blue water by the reef, they slackened speed, spread themselves out and started cruising back and forth in front of our line. Then suddenly, there was no more of them.

In the strained silence that followed, I thought they were gone. The disappointment was so sharp, I did not stop to think then that, even so, I had seen a very strange thing. I was in the act of touching the dreamer's shoulder to take my leave when he turned his still face to me: "The king out of the west comes to meet me," he murmured, pointing downwards. My eyes followed his hand. There, not ten yards away, was the great shape of a porpoise poised like a glimmering shadow in the glass-green water. Behind it followed a whole dusky flotilla of them.

They were moving towards us in extended order with spaces of two or three yards between them, as far as my eye could reach. So slowly they came, they seemed to be hung in a trance. Their leader drifted in hard by the dreamer's legs. He turned without a word to walk beside it as it idled towards the shallows. I followed a foot or two behind its almost motionless tail. I saw other groups to right and left of us turn shorewards one by one, arms lifted, faces bent upon the water.

A babble of quiet talk sprang up; I dropped behind to take in the whole scene. The villagers were welcoming their guests ashore with crooning words. Only men were walking beside them; the women and children followed in their wake, clapping their hands softly in the rhythm of a dance. As we approached the emerald shallows, the keels of the creatures began to take the sand; they flapped gently as if asking for help. The men leaned down to throw their arms around the great barrels and ease them over the ridges. They showed no least sign of alarm. It was as if their single wish was to get to the beach.

When the water stood only thigh deep, the dreamer flung arms high and called. Men from either flank came crowding

to surround the visitors, ten or more to each beast. Then, "Lift!" shouted the dreamer, and the ponderous black shapes were half-dragged, half-carried, unresisting, to the lip of the tide. There they settled down, those beautiful, dignified shapes, utterly at peace, while all hell broke loose around them. Men, women and children, leaping and posturing with shrieks that tore the sky, stripped off their garlands and flung them around the still bodies, in a sudden dreadful fury of boastfulness and derision. My mind still shrinks from that last scene—the raving humans, the beasts so triumphantly at rest.

We left them garlanded where they lay and returned to our houses. Later, when the falling tide had stranded them high and dry, men went down with knives to cut them up. There was feasting and dancing in Kuma that night. A chief's portion of the meat was set aside for me. I was expected to have it cured as a diet for my thinness. It was duly salted, but I could not bring myself to eat it. I never did grow fat in the Gilbert Islands.

Cullenbenbong

BERNARD O'REILLY

Cullenbenbong was written by Bernard O'Reilly during the Second World War, while he was serving with the 2/15 Battalion, A.I.F. He somewhat modestly says in his introduction that "these chapters make no pretence of being other than an untidy collection of memories. . . . You may, if you wish call them a reaction from the thunder and massed slaughter of an over-mechanized world." This story of Cronje tells of adventures in Australia far removed from modern warfare. Cronje was "the last of a long line of high-blooded rebel stallions which for seventy years were lords of the great uninhabited mountain region away to the south. Three generations of settlers had tried to remove their menace. Their stock did not degenerate; they were ruthless killers as well as aristocrats, and their razor-edged teeth and hooves spelt death to the weakling or the inbred in their ranks. Like the bad brigands which they were, they swooped down from their mountain eyries at night while the peaceful settlement slept—swiftly they struck, killing quiet horses to left and right and then before the settlers could take their Sniders down from the racks they'd be gone, carrying off valuable mares back to their strongholds."

Cronje

Down through the years the settlers fought and captured the brumbies and shot wild stallions with Martinis and Sniders and

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top of the falls paddock, and Clipper feeding around the paddock spring.

where the pasture is two thousand square miles of rugged country, there are other factors. Feed is the main one; the kind and quality of grass will vary according to the geological and chemical content of the soil, therefore you would look for differences in granite or basaltic country, but not in sandstone or rhyolite. That gives you a margin for a start, but you still have pretty much a thousand square miles left. The next things to consider are the season of the year and the kind of year it is. If it is winter they will be down in the sheltered pockets facing the north-east; they will melt, too, from the harsh westerlies of summer. When there has been cold wind and driving rain from the coast they will be west of the Divide. In a wet year they will tend to feed on the sunny northern slopes where the grass will be sweeter; in a dry year that grass would be dried up and the grass on the southern slopes would be sweet. In periods of severe drought, when there was no grass, they would be found either on the marshy lands, high up on the level tops, or else in the edible scrubs down on the sides of the river gorges. If part of the country had been recently swept by bushfire, the resultant sweet feed would have attracted them. Water, too, was an important clue, especially in drought time, when the drinking places were limited. Also most animals prefer water which is slightly mineralized, another point which narrowed the odds down.

All these were rough pointers; the main guide was the first named, that preference of a horse for a bit of country he takes a fancy to, and since there was country to suit all conditions of season and weather in his part of the ranges, Cronje's run was limited to roughly a hundred square miles.

One of the first attempts to run him was made from out on the tops towards Jenolan Caves. Someone had gone to spy him out a day or two before. It was planned to run him some ten miles along the timbered tops, then through Alum Gap and down the gorge into the head of Cullenbenbong Creek. This had

then a last whistle and he was gone, flashing through the turpentine where downward shafts of sunshine fleetingly glittered on his glossy back.

The brumbies had gone in the right direction—they had no choice; the two finest horsemen were riding on either wing, and Cronje's brief pause was all to the good, for the run had settled down to top speed before he could get to the front and exercise his leadership. As it was, when he did take the lead, he made things red-hot for first one wing and then the other. He led the run into the dangerous wombat country, then into a thick young forest of stringybarks which had followed an ancient bushfire and finally out along the high tops through the low crooked snow gums, but the terrific pace never slackened, and at every gap a fresh relay of men took over; the only chance of capturing the rebel was to wear him out by pushing him at top speed with relays of fresh horses.

Cronje was running for his freedom, but it was certain that he was enjoying the run even more than his pursuers—his contempt for them was obvious, and his confidence in his own power was supreme.

Back at Alum Gap a double line of men was stationed funnel fashion, converging on the gap; these men were roughly three chains apart. They had the hardest job, that of waiting, for there is nothing more irksome than to sit like a rock on your horse, without even the comfort of a pipe, while your mates are in the thick of glorious action. But presently, above the sound of wind in the turpentine, came the distant racket of stockwhips and the "Hoy!" "Hoy!" "Hoy!" of the runners. "They're coming!" The word went along the lines, and each man felt a tingling of the spine, and every horse became fretful.

The hopes of wearing down Cronje by the pace of the run were not realized, for though most of his mob were blowing badly, he was still in a playful mood. Sometimes he deliberately lagged amongst the others and then with a sudden burst of speed he'd flash off and leave them standing.

As the thunder of the running rose to a wild pitch, so did the eager blood of the waiting men, and then slashing through the treeferns and underbrush the wild mob came flying right into the net of desperate hard-riding men. Quickly the funnel closed in behind the wild horses, and the laneway of men closed in formation as the mob thundered into the gap.

It was here that Cronje suddenly knew there was something wrong, and all his wild instinct told him that once down that gap there would be no return. He plunged to a dead stop from the top of his wild gallop, propping his front legs stiffly as his hoofs ploughed up the loose rocks, then he turned and rushed the runners, straight into a murderous barrage of stockwhips. It was that lightning prop and wheel which won the day for Cronje, for that instantaneous reverse had every man riding at top speed in the wrong direction. Cronje, in crashing through the close-packed line, was clear away—they would have to stop and turn their horses. But there was one man who had foreseen just such a move; who knew Cronje's mettle from a previous experience. That was young Pat Cullen of Cullenbenbong Creek; he had been riding wide and watching, and now he swooped down with a burst of speed that was beautiful to see. It was like a superb bit of anticipation which you might see at an international football match, where a fullback comes from nowhere to cut off a flying winger; but the field was a steep rocky mountain side and the play was at racecourse speed. Pat rode on to the rebel at shoulder point, on the correct turning angle from which a beast cannot get back or forward; they say he'd have turned Cronje without a doubt, but at a vital moment his gallant horse crashed into a wombat burrow and Pat went spinning along the ground like a football until they thought he'd never stop. Cronje cleared the fallen horse in his stride, and with a last triumphant whistle he crashed off around the mountain side, rocks from his flying hooves rolling into the gorge two thousand feet below.

Pat got to his feet, badly bruised and shaken, but his horse

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rose again "We'll get him next time," was Pat's only
ment.

With the general confusion in the breaking of the line and
s fall, many of Cronje's followers escaped, but there remained
fair few consolation prizes. The young men, far from being
discouraged, were only more determined that an animal of such
speed and stamina should not waste his life in the ranges.

Some weeks later a small bushfire crossed from the Black
Range and burnt out the country around Alum Gap. A thunder-
storm brought good sweet feed, and wild horses drifted over to
make the best use of it; water was not plentiful, and they used to
go to the Gap to a spring.

It was a good chance for the brumby runners to exploit another
trick learned from the older men. One day they assembled a
large working bee; there were bars and shovels, axes and wire,
and they built a sapling yard where the ridges narrowed in
towards the water. There were two wide wings running funnel-
shaped to the gateway, and the yard was roughly circular, but
two panels at the back were not erected and the sliprails of the
gateway were not put in, allowing the wild horses to walk
through to water as before.

It was a stout yard, eight feet high and strong enough to hold
any wild horse—or almost any. This done, the men mounted
and rode silently back to the settlements, leaving the horses to
get used to the idea.

At first Cronje would not allow any of his subjects to go near
a contraption which looked and smelled so blatantly of the
enemy, man, and he led them off to drink at a swampy place
some miles away. But the weather was hot and the water journey
irksome, also the flavour of the swamp water offended his
sensitive palate.

All smell of man had gone from the yard, and gradually
became part of the scenery like the rocks and trees about. Then
one day a man rode up to look and reported on his return
there were numerous horse tracks through the yard to "w

"Now's the time," the word went round, and so a score of them rode off in the red of morning, when the pungent scent of wet grass arose from the trampling of horses' feet. The day's run was to be short and swift. First they rode quietly to the yard, slipped the rails of the two missing panels into position and wired them. This done, they set out to encircle the brumbies.

There was an east breeze stirring the turpentines, so they rode well to westward and came upon the burnt country from behind. Cronje sniffed the air and whistled; he had scented the wing advancing to westward. He led his mob to westward only to encounter the western horn of the crescent, so he was forced to gallop straight ahead along the track to water; this suited his purpose, there was a getaway beyond the spring. They galloped into the wings and a wall of horsemen riding stirrup to stirrup closed the gap behind him; before he knew it he was in a yard for the first time in his life.

He was like a great wave which rushes into a rock-walled inlet and leaps at the black cliffs to fall back and leap again. He was a mighty dynamic power a thousand times too great for the small space in which he was locked. It was like the fury of a thunderstorm confined to four walls. It became a question of whether the fence would break or the horse would dash himself to pieces, and then there was a crash and a splintering of rails, the defiant blast of his whistle, the flash of mirrored backs in the dappled sunlight, and Cronje had led his wild mob to freedom.

"They'll never get him," people were beginning to say, and for a while the runners were discouraged, but of this they were certain, whoever got Cronje would get one of the best horses in Australia, and that was a stake that almost any bushman would gamble for. There had been easterly rains, and the horses had been running over near the Lockup, west of the Divide. The Lockup was a cliff-walled valley with a bottle-neck entrance—an ideal place to yard the rebel if he could be induced to go into it. Men waited and spied in the hope that he might lead his subjects to pasture there, but in vain.

Then Cronje himself brought matters to a head by indulging in one of his night raids, and again the clarion call went out to the brumby runners.

They rode to the Lockup and built a stockade deep in the bottle neck; the ranges and the cliffs themselves would be the wings, and even if Cronje did smash through the yard he would still be in the Lockup. A pretty sound plan all round; the drawbacks were two, the extreme ruggedness of the country and the fact that the Lockup and its approaches were not part of Cronje's run—a wild horse on the run likes to stick to familiar ground.

On this run the broken nature of the country tended to make encirclement difficult, but they finally got the mob moving in the direction of the Lockup. Cronje at once sensed danger ahead and fought like the wild thing he was to get round the edge of the wings. Then, when he found that the mob hampered his speed, he deserted them, taking only a few who could keep his terrific pace. I wrongly used the word "deserted" there; it is first-class wild horse strategy to split a mob, and Cronje was a master strategist. Of necessity, the runners also dropped the slower mob to keep up with their prize. It was a wild run with burning speed and rugged country, a disastrous run, two good saddle horses were killed and a man injured, but still the relentless pace was held; the lads that day rode as their fathers had ridden, and though he tried every trick of speed cunning, the outlaw, and his small band were at last galloping to the stockade with a solid wall of horsemen filling the grim wings behind them.

Did Cronje see in one swift glance that here was a yard he couldn't break, or did his instinct tell him that beyond that yard was a cliff-walled prison; we don't know, but this is certain, Cronje knew that once inside that yard his liberty was gone for ever, and this led him to do the most desperate deed in the whole history of brumby running. He turned and rushed at the solid wall of horses and men. "He's coming!" they shouted, and pulled their mounts sideways so that they were locked shoulder to flank

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s alone. Unhampered by his string, all his brilliance came into play. He had the flashing speed of a swallow and the subtle knowledge of an old fox, and at bay he was as dangerous as a regal tiger. All the hereditary instinct and cunning, all the speed and endurance born of generations of running were innate in one supreme wild horse, Cronje.

The runners, too, had endurance and courage and knowledge born of generations of brumby running, so that day it was a battle of the giants, with the odds slightly in Cronje's favour. Mile after mile they crashed through the timber with thundering speed, which was never allowed to slacken. Cronje was covering more ground than the runners, for he crossed repeatedly from one wing to another in hopes of out-manceuvring them, but as always the two crack men rode on either wing tip and they allowed the wild horse no quarter.

At last the rebel showed signs of tiring; fresh relay after relay had pushed him to his utmost speed, and for the first time in his wild life he felt sword-like stabs of agony in his mighty chest. His breathing became laboured, he ran listlessly with his head down, an automaton whose powerful body refused to give up, and so it was that they ran him in between the narrowing rock walls which led into the Pit of Hell.

But here again came one of those uncanny flashes of instinct which had aroused an almost superstitious awe of the super horse. Though he was dulled by physical weariness, Cronje suddenly threw up his head; what told him that beyond that rock gateway was a land of slavery? He gathered his failing strength for a last mighty effort. He turned with his old lightning speed, cut his way through the rain of stockwhips and broke through the line clear to the open.

The men turned and followed, but they couldn't push him. Their horses were blowing, too, for the last relay had had the worst of it. So they plugged easily along, keeping Cronje in sight and knowing that they would soon pick up with the earlier runners now riding forward with spelled horses. Cronje's wind

coming back, and he started to gallop again, when around the hill ahead came a knot of fresh horsemen.

They deployed quickly, but the left wing was too late to turn Cronje back to the Pit. Instead he started up a long ridge which led to the mountain top. It was steep and rocky and the wild horse began to blow, but the new relay had fresh horses and they pushed him as fast as the terrain would permit. They gained the plateau top and ran him hard across stunted heath country, knee deep through acres of purple boronia and snowy flannel flowers, along the cliff edges where endless billows of mighty ranges stretched into the blue distance. Cronje ran blindly, automatically, with the ever-increasing agony of exhaustion. The men had no plan save to follow him until he dropped.

Here Cronje's instinct appeared to desert him; he followed down a sloping ridge which led out to a long point; the point narrowed into a tiny peninsula, and cliffs fell away to blue air on every side save the narrow neck of the approach. The wild horse ran blindly to the cliffs, then turned to find himself trapped.

But there was no despair or listlessness about him now; you could almost see the spirit flowing back into his exhausted body, his mane and tail arched high and his proud head was held aloft as he faced his captors. Thus went the proud Christians to the arena. He trotted around the cliff, looking over and then back to where the men were massed on the little isthmus; he measured them, knowing that an assault was futile. He trotted back to the cliff, stamped and whistled, tossed his mane proudly and then plunged; his body flashed in a beautiful arc and disappeared into the blue air beyond the cliff rim. With a cry of agony and horror the men rushed to the edge and looked over. Cronje had landed lightly as a rock wallaby on a narrow ledge over twenty feet below, but now they held their breaths as he leaped for a narrow ledge lower down. He landed with four feet, his hooves and rocks from his hard feet spun out into the gorge. He worked to where the ledge ended and gave on to the ground.

pendicular slope of loose rock particles like alpine scree. There was no foothold on this slope, and the least weight would start a rockslide; no wallaby would ever have dared to cross it. There was but one hope for Cronje, speed; the slightest pause on the slope and he would be borne off on a rockslide to his destruction far below.

He stood waiting for minutes on the end of the ledge while the men above cursed and prayed and held their breaths. Was he summing up the situation or was he waiting until his wind returned for one supreme effort? Men gripped the cliff edges, their brown hands turned white.

Then he leaped, a mighty breath-taking leap which carried him far out into the scree. The men groaned as he sank about his fetlocks, but he rose out of it again with the ease of a show-jumper from velvet turf. On he bounded, a river of loose rock from his flying feet cascading into the gorge a thousand feet below. Now he was in the centre of the slide, where the rock was looser; deeper and ever deeper he sank into the sharp shingle until his magnificent strength, sorely tried by the long run, began to fail.

At last he was caught and the rockslide dragged his hindquarters down hill, but he wasn't done yet—those years of clean running had built muscles for just this effort; that splendid strength and courage which had served him so well before could they fail him now? Then with a mighty effort which would have burst the heart of another horse, he wrenched free from the clutching rockslide which was dragging him to death and plunged valiantly on—nothing could stop him on firmer ground; a few more bounds and he was on the strewn ridge; behind him the whole mountain he had traversed was a running river of rock.

He paused on the ridge, only for a moment, before he plunged down into the gorge. He looked back once and then on with that thrilling wild-horse run straight to the bottom of the ring of his hooves and the clatter of the rocks.

him, and they watched him, a small dot now, disappear into the timber along Jenolan River.

They didn't cheer him, those brown men who had risked their lives to capture him, but there were tears in their eyes as they watched him go. It was Tom Boyle who broke the silence with the words that were in everyone's mind, "Good-bye, old cove, we will never run you again." And they never did.

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Then he leaped, a mighty breath-taking leap which carried him far out into the scree. The men groaned as he sank above his fetlocks, but he rose out of it again with the ease of a show horse jumping from velvet turf. On he bounded, a river of loose rock from his flying feet cascading into the gorge a thousand feet below. Now he was in the centre of the slide, where the rock was looser; deeper and ever deeper he sank into the sharp shingle until his magnificent strength, sorely tried by the long run, began to fail.

At last he was caught and the rockslide dragged his hind-quarters down hill, but he wasn't done yet—those years of hard clean running had built muscles for just this effort; that splendid strength and courage which had served him so well before, could they fail him now? Then with a mighty effort which would have burst the heart of another horse, he wrenched free of the clutching rockslide which was dragging him to death; he plunged valiantly on—nothing could stop him now; he struck firmer ground; a few more bounds and he was safe on a rock-strewn ridge; behind him the whole mountain side which he had traversed was a running river of rock.

He paused on the ridge, only for a moment; it led sharply down into the gorge. He looked back once and then went flying with that thrilling wild-horse run straight to bottom; they heard the ring of his hooves and the clatter of the rocks he took with

him, and they watched him, a small dot now, disappear into the timber along Jenolan River.

They didn't cheer him, those brown men who had risked their lives to capture him, but there were tears in their eyes as they watched him go. It was Tom Boyle who broke the silence with the words that were in everyone's mind, "Good-bye, old cove, we will never run you again." And they never did.

Venture to the Interior

LAURENS VAN DER POST

Venture to the Interior is an account of a journey of exploration to the remote parts of Nyasaland undertaken in 1949. There is no need of further introduction beyond the explanation that the Nyika is the plateau which Colonel van der Post set out to explore. The native "were terrified of it. It was high, it was misty, it had tremendous encounters with rain and thunder. If one listened to the natives talk about Nyika one always heard about some tragedy connected with it."

I left Msusi by jeep in a thick, blue mist thirty-six hours after my arrival on the Tuesday morning. We all sat in front. Once back on the road to Fort Hill we went really fast. We passed through several small native settlements, and everywhere the population came to attention, as it were, when we went by; bowed if they were old, raised their hats if they had any, and then brought them down to hang respectfully in their hands by their sides.

A hard, cold wind tore down the road outside Enkwedeni. We went straight into it at forty-eight miles an hour, and left a high column of dust rising in the air behind us. We were off the high-lands now, had done with physical eccentricities like the Vipya and once again there began the prevailing African theme of bush-plain, river and lone blue-hill, until suddenly, about sixty miles away, I saw the Nyika.

Everything at that distance looks small, and yet I found my pulse quickening at the view. There was a sort of Rider Haggard, a King Solomon's Mines, a Queen of Sheba touch about it. A massive, long, blue escarpment, a wall of solid, unbroken mountain rose sheer out of the land and lost itself in the clouds. This wall became bigger, more precise, but it did not change. Still its cloud-capped blue towered unbroken in the forefront of our vision. Only at Njakwa—another native township nearly seventy miles farther on—we were nearly at the base of it, at last.

As we drove into the native town of Katumbi and stopped outside the Chief's court-house, the entire population seemed to drop what they were doing in order to pour out of their huts and run towards us. Their curiosity was quite unashamed but most friendly. They did not see a white face every day and were determined to make the most of mine. They pressed round the jeep and commented on my physical appearance: "Did you ever see such coloured hair?" "How big his nose is!" "Look at his eyes. His cheeks are very red! Is he angry, you think?" "How much do you think that coat of his cost?" and so on endlessly.

Meanwhile I sent Patrick to see if the chief, the Umfumo, was there. He came back with one Patrick Kawonga, the clerk of the Umfumo's court, a handsome young man pleasant, polite, but again with such a melancholy expression on his face that I knew he must be very well educated. I was not mistaken. He told me in clear, precise English that the Umfumo was away but that he would deal with the situation as best he could. I thanked him, but decided there and then not to return to Msusi or Nzimba but to go straight on to Karonga, the northernmost province of Nyasaland, leaving Patrick behind me. I had come prepared to do that if necessary. I also had with me a letter to the D.C. there, and Alan had asked me to call on his Veterinary Officer at Karonga, a Michael Dowler, who would help me.

I took out my map and studied it carefully. This was not difficult. Facts, reliable facts, on maps of this part of Africa are few and far between. Karonga was too far for that day, but my

eye fixed on Nchena-Chena, the Agricultural research station at the foot of the Nyika, about thirty miles from the Rumpi Gorge. The officer in charge of it, Colonel Henderson, was an old friend of Grantham's. If he was away, I would either sleep on the road or try and cadge a night's lodging at Livingstonia, another twenty or thirty miles farther on, and the greatest of Nyasaland's mission stations.

At a quarter-past five the jeep drew up outside Colonel Henderson's house, Nyasaland Office-of-Works emergency pattern. The evening was closing in rapidly. Behind the house, almost from the kitchen doorstep, the land gathered itself together steeply and rose covered with forest like a dark, blue-green wall seven thousand feet high, sheer into the cloud. All round about was the sound of falling, running water, and now more strongly than ever I had a sense that behind the wall of mountain and beyond the cloud, a gigantic purple cat was purring and purring with an incurable smugness and satisfaction.

I could not on this first close contact with the Nyika understand why it should be thought sinister. Mlanje had given me the creeps from the start by its quality of ill-suppressed prehistoric rage. The feeling here was different, not friendly, just utterly self-contained and satisfied.

Wherever I had met Henderson I should have known him for what he was, a soldier formed in the 1914-18 war. When as a mere boy in the late Edwardian world, he first went to Sandhurst, it had been his ambition to make a career of soldiering. The war cured him of that. He had joined the Agricultural department of Nyasaland. He had made two blades of grass grow where one grew before—and I use that phrase deliberately because Swift's sentence from which it is taken was nailed like a flag to the wall over his desk.

Henderson, too, knew the Nyika. He had, years before, laid down an experimental pyrethrum plot on the lip of the plateau, just behind his house, eight thousand two hundred feet up. The soil was fertile. He had grown crops equal to the world's best,

but in the end let the work lapse because he could not get the Africans, for whom it was done, to go there.

"I don't know what it is," he said, "but they will not live on the Nyika at any price. It is, as far as we know, completely uninhabited."

He was gloomy about my finding bearers to go with me. The harvest was on. It was cold, the old story. He thought I was wasting my time going to Karonga, the people of those hot plains would go with me least of all.

I made up my camp bed in Henderson's office that night, but before going to sleep, went outside to look at the mountains at the back. I could not see them, but again I felt their presence deep in the nerves of my body. I sat there for quite a while on a stone, being aware of them, and listening to the sound of infinitely falling water. Then, for the first time since my arrival in Nyasaland, I heard African drums warming up. I could see no fires, but everywhere in the black bush around the drums began. The tap-a-tap, tap-a-tap-tap-tap would break out in one place and then be answered in dozens of others near and far. As the night went on the drumming gathered speed, density and power. The darkness vibrated with its urgency. The sound of it, the purring of the great purple cat behind the clouds and the beat of my own heart harmonized so well, that I was soon sound asleep.

The next day we started early. The road ~~was at the~~ base of the Nyika itself. On our left was ~~that snow-capped~~ mountain, its head buried in cloud; on our right ~~a low~~ by the Rumpi and Rukuru rivers, and ~~on the right~~ another chain of massive mountains. ~~It presented~~ solid, unyielding, unbroken front ~~that we~~ could see no obvious way up ~~in fact it~~ not be one. Yet my task was ~~confronted~~ mit. I noticed that native ~~camp~~ the fringe of the base of ~~the Nyika~~ densely covered with rain-forest ~~and the~~

An hour later we began climbing.

four thousand feet, which suddenly barred our way to the east. We climbed down and out of two deep valleys cut into its sides by the Rumpi—another Rumpi—and the Mwanana Rumpi, and by a series of steep hairpin bends reached the top. There I made Peaches stop, and looked back.

We were high up now and the Nyika looked twice the size it had looked from below. In order to appreciate the greatness of these mountains properly, one must oneself have achieved a certain height. Below there is no standard of comparison, but once one is some thousands of feet up the vastness of their scale becomes apparent and takes away one's breath.

For thirty miles, as far as I could see, there was nothing but this unbroken wall of mountain, standing on the tip of its toes on the edge of a great depression, its head in the clouds.

Only opposite me, where the two rivers emerged, was there a tremendous split in the mountain wall which went back as far as I could see, hemmed in from rain-forest base to glistening grey cloud-tops.

Away to our right and on our own level, lay the great mission station of Livingstonia. To our mountain-, plain- and bush-fed eyes, its neat, red-tiled roof-tops and great cathedral walls rising above the acacia and brachastygea fringe of the horizon, it was an astonishing sight. It looked a brave, if terribly small, European gesture, a small clenched fist shaken at the world of giants around.

Three miles further we came over the top and started going down. Then the sun suddenly came out. We were emerging from underneath the umbrella of cloud that lay on the mountains. We rounded a corner and saw Lake Nyasa. I have seen it many times from the air, from far-off mountain-tops and remote passes in the hills, but I had never been so near.

Three thousand sheer feet down there it was, that miracle of so much water in the midst of so much land. Indeed Lake Nyasa is a sea rather than a lake, and when one has said that, there is, as about the sea itself, nothing further to add which is neither an

anti-climax nor bathos. Only on that morning it was a singularly gay sight. Very blue and sparkling in the sun, and with the far blue summits of the great Livingstone range, on the far eastern side about fifty miles away, pressing like Alps around, there was about it something of the Mediterranean in the spring. Away to the south, as far as the eye could reach, there was just blue water and nothing else. High as we were, we could hear the waves pounding the shore, as if they were indeed sea-waves. We started down eagerly towards the lake.

The road dropped down the face of a three-thousand-foot cliff. It was cut into the mountain side in a series of desperate zigzags. There were twenty-three of these inclines, each half a mile long; and when we looked up from below, our descent and, still more, the construction of the road itself, seemed an almost impossible feat. Yet that road was not the product of modern engineering. It was a product of missionary faith and zeal, built many years ago by believing amateurs with the help only of unskilled, unbelieving Africans.

At the foot of the escarpment the road swung away sharply to the north. We travelled slowly because it was so broken. For sixty miles it followed close by the lake shore on our right, whilst on our left was the wall of the Nyika, its cap of grey cloud still pulled down firmly about its ears. But as the plain between water and mountain widened it seemed to swing away in giant strides to the north-east.

It got hot. At first the country was thickly populated and desperately over-cultivated, but afterwards for most of the way it was nothing but shimmering grey bush, pale with sunlight on its long white thorns, and only splashed with colour where it showed a baobab tree or two, like a birthmark on its sallow cheeks. It shimmered, trembled and danced incessantly in the heat, and it was deathly silent whenever the shrill cicada hymn to sun and thorn would allow it. At four in the afternoon, the Nyika well out of sight, we drove into the native town of Karonga.

An immense crowd of black people was surging over the

landing strip in the centre of the town. Drums were beating, people singing, shouting battle cries and blowing shrill whistles. All over the place, independent bands and teams of natives, with baboon tails and leopard claws tied round their middles in all possible varieties of jungle fantasy, danced, leapt, swirled and stamped their feet, roaring deep down in their stomachs with a mad, ecstatic abandon. Neither Peaches nor I knew what to make of it.

We might have been alarmed, since the commotion and noise were terrific, but for the fact that nowhere was there a policeman or a uniform of any kind to be seen, and that the black people who were not actually dancing, leaping, shrieking, beating drums or ceaselessly blowing whistles, were dressed in the favourite flaming colours of their best clothes. Then suddenly I saw three topees, three European heads, floating like the corks of a fishing net on this heaving sea of twelve thousand black, prancing figures.

No one appeared to have noticed my arrival. I got out of the jeep and went among the crowd. The noise was deafening, but it was the sweetest-smelling, the cleanest African crowd I had ever been among. I suddenly felt how lovely it was to be among so many people and no longer sitting silently in a prancing jeep, holding myself back from a too great awareness of the aggressive, disturbing physical quality of Africa. The feeling warmed me through like wine, gave me a feeling of being a sort of ancient mariner walking among a goodly company.

I slowly made my way to the three topees. When I got near, I saw that they were deeply concerned in a tug-of-war. Two of them, nice-looking, clean-shaven Englishmen, in spotlessly neat khaki shorts and shirts, were directing operations, whilst a third, with a long, lean, sensitive face, grey eyes and a small cavalry moustache, his hair perhaps just a shade too long, was sitting at ease rather nonchalantly on a shooting-stick and just watching them. The glow, the smile, in his wide grey eyes, however, belied the nonchalant pose of his body. A very tall African of about six foot eight was helping the other two. He was wearing

dark suède shoes with plum-coloured stockings, fine navy shorts, a yellow silk shirt and green silk muffler. He had a gold watch on his wrist and a Livingstone-Stanley topee in his hand.

The two teams were keen. They faced each other like Angoni Impis going to war. The crowd was wildly excited. Both sides pulled with such a will and the crowd roared such encouragement that thrice they pulled apart a rope the size of a ship's cable, and to everybody's huge delight the two teams landed in a heap in the dust. It was a wonderful laugh that followed. It rang out absolutely instantly and spontaneously, like a loud peal from a bell hung in that blue sky over us. I felt like beginning to dance myself.

Suddenly I heard the older of the two Englishmen say to the other, in an agonized voice: "For God's sake, Jerry, go and hide the prizes quickly! We shan't get a decision. We have no thicker rope."

"Can't we give them all prizes?" asked Jerry, hesitating.

The other scratched his chin and said, "It's rather a lot of money, you know. I'm not sure I can afford to spend any more. . . ."

"Don't let us worry about that," said Jerry, now dead keen, "I would like to come in fifty-fifty with you."

The man on the shooting-stick seemed the least engaged, so I went over to him, introduced myself, and asked for Michael Dowler.

"I am Dowler," he said. "I am delighted. I have been expecting you. Come and meet the others. What do you think of our family?" he added, as we shook hands. "We have given the whole town a day off—King's birthday, of course."

I spent the night with Michael Dowler, in his house on the edge of the landing-strip, now empty, black and silent. Because of the damp and the heat the house was built on two floors like the old-fashioned, lake-side houses, and was closed in from head to foot with mosquito wire-netting.

The lake was close by. The moment we stopped speaking, the noise of the waves on the shore, a short, choppy, lapping noise, like the sea on an East Coast Channel beach, came in through the wide open doors and windows behind the mosquito netting, and spread throughout the house. The house itself smelt strongly of bats. Dowler carried on an intermittent war against them, but they were prolific and determined. Their smell, no matter what he did, penetrated everywhere: an acrid, ancient smell which touched, inside oneself, some fearful, obscure instinct beyond experience and knowing. Every now and then there would be a rush of their wings in the dark outside, followed by a burst of high-pitched squeaking, almost too sharp for human ears to bear. And all night long there was the sound of native drums: people drumming by the dark lake shore, drumming on the outskirts of the town and far back in the bush, which was now quite dark, with ranks closed tightly against the night and its arrows of stars.

Dowler was a bachelor. He was a man of about thirty-five. He was sensitive and loved civilized things—music, books, good food and comfort. His house on the lake bore eloquent testimony to all this; but, if he wanted civilization, why come to Africa? He lived by the great lake with a certain royal abandon. He had four handsome, well-dressed African servants, who were obviously devoted to him and he to them. He watched over them with a solicitude remarkable in one so young. The more I got to know Michael, the clearer became my impression that he gave these children of African nature the consideration and affection he would have liked to give his own dark, unfulfilled self, only centuries of so-called European civilized values prevented him from doing this. We all have a dark figure within ourselves, a negro, a gipsy, an aboriginal with averted back, and, alas! the nearest many of us can get to making terms with him is to strike up these vicarious friendships with him through the black people of Africa.

We talked late into the night alone on the veranda. Michael assured me he had always wanted to go on the Nyika. It drove

of the African lakeside Chiefs, whose authority stretched far back into the foothills of the Nyika itself. We came to Bwamantapira's village late in the afternoon. I do not know if he understood a word we said to him. He was dragged almost to the door of his small mud bungalow by a young wife and two handsome little black boys, and stood there in a daze, a fat, handsome man, swaying on his feet, dead drunk, agreeing amiably to all we said.

The dark overtook us on the way back, but it was preceded by a clear, and unbelievably tender twilight. Michael had been out in the bush with his gun when it came. He had stopped to go after some guinea-fowl we had seen flying back from the lake to roost in golden trees. They seemed in the sunset glow to be covered in blue and silver sequins, with little scarlet scimitars over their dainty heads. The moment I saw them I knew Michael would not be able to resist following them. He was gone about twenty minutes. Meanwhile I sat by the side of the road and listened to the night symphony of the bush tuning up.

Fifty yards away a little duiker doe stepped out of the bush, looked at the car for about a minute, with the most arch and innocent surprise, and then stepped delicately back into the bush. Ten minutes later a large lion with a long black mane, walked out purposefully at the same place and, without looking right or left, disappeared into cover on the far side. Near at hand three Franklyn partridges rose up in noisy hysteria. High overhead an eagle flew slowly by on ponderous wings, the pink afterglow burning on its feathers and glinting off a long silver fish in its talons. The night birds, lakeside frogs and crickets, gathered the scattered sparks of sound together and sent up into the silence a flame of evening song and praise. I was sorry when Michael ended the moment by stepping quietly out of the bush.

I told him about the lion. "Oh!" he said, with hardly a show of interest, "I expect it must be that fellow I nearly ran down with the car, just about here, the other night."

We dined that night with the District Commissioner, Peter Gracey, and his wife Joan. The light had gone long before we

He looked at me sharply for a moment and said: "I expect he heard the same thing, in other ways."

He went on to say that the more he knew the African, the more impressed he was by the fact that when Livingstone died his bearers carried his dead body for hundreds of miles through hostile, dangerous country to the coast. It was a deed so remote from their normal state of being that he never ceased to wonder at it. Years ago he had met a very old native who remembered seeing Livingstone standing in the lake washing. When he lathered his head, the old man said, they all ran away because they thought he was a wizard taking his brains out. Yet with all that sort of superstition and ignorance about him, Livingstone captured their imagination to such an extent that, dead, he still urged his servants on. This was the real measure of the quality of his greatness.

Certainly, as I listened in my bed that night to the waves on the shore, and recalled my first sight of the lake, I could understand as I had never done before how Livingstone could be both such a God-drunk and lake-intoxicated person. Having looked that wide land full in the face and seen those waters in their great frame of mountain and incalculable sky, it is not hard to realize how a search for them could easily be identified with a search for God.

I left Karonga before dawn the next day. As we now knew the road, we travelled fast, Peaches and I taking turns at the wheel. At four in the afternoon I was back at Msusi. Grantham was away with the General, but had left his house warm and open for me. I picked up my tents, blankets, cooking pots, ropes, petrol and food supplies. The jeep looked like a Christmas tree on wheels.

The next day we left again at dawn, and slept the night at Deep Bay on the lake with a hospitable trader at the depot of the African Lakes Corporation. We were back in Karonga soon after 9 a.m. and found the first bearers coming in.

Michael was delighted with the way things seemed to be

going. The five days were not up until the following evening, but already eleven sturdy young bearers had come in and were being fed in the kitchen yard, seven of whom he knew from previous journeys in the bush.

We spent a busy day organizing our loads.

In the afternoon I did a round of the few small Indian stores in Karonga. I bought up almost their entire supply of blankets as well as a good quantity of salt, which we intended using as money in the hills, where it is very scarce.

Just before sundown Michael and I walked to the lake shore through green-gold papyrus grass shoulder-high and tasselled with seed. As it swayed in the slow breath of the evening air it seemed to spike and splinter the light between us and the sun.

The lake, in spite of its dense population of crocodiles, was full of black people washing. Some young girls, after coming out of the water, started to dance on the shining foreshore. They carried scarlet, yellow and brown wraps which, as they leaped and ran, they wove and unwove round their slim naked bodies. Some long, heavy, dug-out canoes, those black ships of Africa, were drawn up high on the beach, and several fishermen sat beside them in the amber light mending their nets, serenely continuous in their antique occupation. The waves of the lake pounded briskly, and urgently, at their feet, but they worked on unheeding.

Far away across the blue waters, on the threshold of Tanganyika, the mountains were purple and gold, their volcanic crevasses running full to the brim with the lava of the sun. It might easily have been a moment set for a meeting between Nausicaa and Odysseus on the Mediterranean shore, but, alas! it had to serve only as a moment of farewell in my own frantic little coming and going.

When we got back to the house, thirty bearers, all young and strong, were there. They made a good sight round their fires that night, and their lively conversation scattered a certain excitement on the air.

But there was a slight set-back the next day. Karramba came in just before lunch, dead-drunk, and with no bearers. I thought Michael's slim frame would burst with rage. He fined Karramba a month's pay, demoted him and straight away sent him on a fifty-mile journey to Bwamantapira with a letter asking the chief to produce ten more bearers for us by the following evening.

We put Harneck in charge of our thirty-five bearers, and gave him one of my guns and some ammunition. We distributed two blankets to each man. They had not expected it and their delight was real and deep. They spread the blankets in the sun, waved them about their heads and filled the air with girlish cries of delight. It was astonishing, the sensitive, maiden-like sounds these husky black bodies suddenly emitted.

Michael then ordered them to take up their loads and with these on their heads and their hands swinging free, one by one they marched out of the yard with a glad will, fell into a single file, singing in a well-calculated rhythm to their long strides, and passed out of sight, the dust raised by their feet rising like a swarm of golden bees into the afternoon air.

We followed on by car the next day and joined them at Deep Bay not far from Bwamantapira's village. The old Chief himself was on the roadside to meet us. He had made an effort to sober up and stood with two red-hatted messengers of his court, waiting erect with immense dignity. He had great charm, knew it and used it effectively on us. He had received Michael's message, and said we could count on him to produce bearers early the next day.

We camped that night by a heavy, black tree. I have seldom seen a tree of a thicker and darker green. It was full of bats and it seemed deeply dyed with their essence, and drenched and dripping with their smell and matter. But it stood on the only level ground, so we had to stay near it.

We had a wonderful view of the lake. It made a perfect deep bay here, with the bush standing tiptoe in the lake surf. Not far out from the shore five sharp pinnacles of rock, stained white

with bird droppings, burned with a dull phosphorescent glow all through the night. We heard the lake all night long, and at one moment a posse of hippopotami who went huffing, puffing and snorting by to raid the native gardens inland.

Our bearers were tired. They had come fifty miles in about thirty-six hours. But we insisted on their getting into our camp drill at once. We made them pitch their tent, taught them how to make their tea, and rationed their rice and sugar. By eight o'clock the camp was fast asleep.

[Some days later the party arrived on the Nyika]

At about noon we were right on the top. At last there was no doubt, we were on the true Nyika, high above the low malarial plains, above sleeping sickness, east coast fevers and the paralysing maladies and parasites of the low country. We were so high that the air smarted in our nostrils; it was so keen and cold that we promptly put on our pullovers. But we had reached the summit. There were no more peaks to conquer, no more heartbreaking climbs up one steep valley and the next. We were on a real plateau; far as our eyes could see stretched a gentle, rhythmically-rolling country of grass and flowers. Round the edges other peaks rose out of the shimmering plain, giving us a keen sense of our exalted world; but they were not our concern save as additional ornament to the immense African frame of our view. South I could see for about fifty miles, then my view was blocked by cloud. But in the whole of the distance between there was nothing but this free, gently rolling country.

I wish I could describe the effect that view had on me, but I will say little more than that it seemed to me miraculous. It was so unlike anything else. It was deep in the heart of Africa and filled with the animals of Africa, and yet it was covered with the grasses, the flowers and colours of Europe. Yet it was unlike any other colour I have ever seen: I expect, basically, it was a tawny gold, the gold of the leopard's rather than the lion's skin, but

this gold was shot through with undertones of a deep blood red and a shadowy purple.

As I looked at it, I understood at once why I had felt below that there was a large, purple cat purring up there behind the clouds. It looked in its colours, its shape and its isolation, a contented, serene, and deeply fulfilled land. It seemed a place which, without human interference, had made its own contract with life, struck its own balance with necessity and nature. Beyond that I cannot go.

After tea Michael, Karramba and I, taking our rifles, walked about two miles down the gentle dale through which the Rukuru ran. It was about twenty minutes before sundown when, round a bend in the stream, we came to a large pool, blue into its deepest depths with the evening sky. On the slope above it was a big grey boulder. All round the pool the mud and earth were deeply cut with the tracks of game. We went up the slope and sat behind a rock and waited to see what we could see.

There was no wind any more. There was no cloud or mist in the sky. I have never known such stillness. The only sound was the sound of one's blood murmuring like a far sea in one's ears: and that serene land and its beauty, and the level golden sunlight seemed to have established such a close, delicate, tender communion with us that the murmur in my ears seemed also like a sound from without; it was like a breathing of the grasses, a rustle of the last shower of daylight, or the swish of the silk of evening across the purple slopes.

Suddenly Karramba touched my arm. We could hardly believe our eyes. A very big male leopard, bronze, his back charged with sunset gold, was walking along the slope above the pool on the far side about fifty yards away. He was walking as if he did not have a fear or care in the world, like an old gentleman with his hands behind his back, taking the evening air in his own private garden. When he was about twelve yards from the pool, he started walking around in circles examining the ground with

great attention. Then he sailed straight over the grass, like a destroyer sinking into the sea, low, fast, and suddenly disappeared from our view. It was rather uncanny. One minute he was magnificently there on the bare slope and the next he was gone from our view. But as if to confirm his presence, three black crows without a sound came and perched themselves on the summit of the slope above him. They seemed to be watching the place where he had vanished as closely as we were, tucking their dark heads deep into their midnight shoulders with solemn absorption.

We waited attentively. About five minutes passed: not a sound anywhere, except this remote music of all our being. I was lying with my ear close to the ground when I heard a new sound that made my heart beat faster: it was the drumming of hooves far away. It was a lovely, urgent, wild, barbaric sound. It was getting louder and coming straight for us. I caught a glimpse of Michael's face, shining with excitement. The drumming of the hooves came towards us from somewhere behind the far slope, like a great Pacific comber, like a charge of Napoleon's cavalry at Waterloo, and then out of the midst of this drumming, this surf of sound, there was thrown up like a call on a silver trumpet, or the voice of an emperor born to command, a loud, clear neigh. It was one of the most beautiful sounds I have ever heard, and it established itself in all my senses like the far silver fountain that I had once seen a great blue whale throw up on a South Atlantic horizon after a storm. Now, as the sun tinted the horizon, the wave of sound rose towering into the air and then crashed down on to the summit of the slope opposite us. A troop of about forty zebra, running as if they had never known walking, the rhythm of their speed moving in waves across their shining flanks, charged over the crest and made for the pool where the leopard lay.

I wondered how it was going to end. I could not believe a leopard would attack such a lusty group of zebra, although I had never seen a leopard behave quite as this one did, so calmly, so

openly. At that very moment, the leader of the troop with his mane streaming from him like the strands of the Mistral itself, stopped dead. At one minute he must have been going at thirty-five miles an hour, at the next he stopped without a slither in his tracks, two fountains of steam shooting out of dilated nostrils.

The rest of the group stopped with him. Had they seen the leopard or seen us? For about five minutes we saw a group of zebra, not fifty yards away, in earnest consultation. I saw Michael raise his gun and then put it down again. He had, I knew, to kill one zebra because it was his duty to examine them for parasites. I saw him take aim several times, but always he put his gun down again.

Meanwhile the consultation went on, soundlessly and ceaselessly. Some invisible, some electric exchange of meaning was going on between those vivid creatures on the darkening slope. They looked so heraldic, like unicorns who had just had their horns pared. They had beautifully marked golden skins, with black blazonings. For five minutes they stood, their steaming heads close together, and then somewhere in the magnetic depths of themselves, their meaning fused and became one. They whirled swiftly round and charged back over the crest straight into the dying day and we did not see them again.

"I am sorry," Michael said to me, breathing hard: "I am sorry but I just could not shoot: they were beautiful."

"I am glad you didn't," I answered.

We got up and walked back, and as we rounded the bend saw that it was not the leopard that had scared the zebra but the smoke of our own camp fires rising straight up into the still air like a palm blue with distance. The camp was just on two miles away, but even that was not far enough for the timid herd.

I spent another three weeks on that lovely plateau, but there is nothing new to say of it. Always it was there as I have described it, alone with itself, its grass, flowers and animals, and no people except us. Every morning we rose early, shook the

dew or frost off our tents and made our way until sunset across a new tract of our exalted land.

We spent two nights at the sombre pond or lake at Kaulime where the serpent is said to live. We did not see the serpent itself, in spite of the fears of our bearers, but I must record that I, Kar-ramba and Harneck all three missed dead-easy shots at game hard by Kaulime, too easy really to be laughed away. When we came back our bearers shrugged their shoulders and the Drummer said: "But Bwana, don't you know there is powerful Mankwala, mighty medicine in that pond?"

I realized how wise I had been not to shoot earlier on. The light was clearer than I had imagined. I paced the distance to where I had first shot at the buck. I had thought it was a hundred to a hundred and twenty yards. It was six hundred and fifty paces away. And I tell this story against myself because it shows how pure and clear the air was over the Nyika, and how full, easy and generous its distances. I am not a bad shot, but it took me five days before I shot my first game.

Every day we saw that warm, electric flicker of flame of game moving in the distance—heraldic zebra, roan antelope with horns like Saracens' swords, and giant eland with purple coats and immaculate white dew-laundered socks. Every morning, even when one did not see them, one knew that the great bronze leopards of the Nyika, with their Assyrian profiles, sat by the edges of their Druid circles of wood sunning themselves and drying the dew off their whiskers; and every evening without fail the great African sun, as it went down far away in Rhodesia, left its light standing like an archangel on the horizon with wide outstretched wings gathering the world to its breast.

For about a fortnight we moved like this through uninhabited country, and then came down one evening in the dark mist at Nchena-Chena.

But we were not finished yet. We had to go back into the vast Rumpi cleft of the Nyika, before we were finished.

One day Harneck and I did a thirty-two mile trek. We went

to the western edge of this new world and looked down immense precipices, and over a black valley for about a hundred miles of peak beyond peak stretching far into the blue Rhodesias. We came back and drank some water at the source of the great Rukuru river. We stalked some zebra but had to abandon our stalk because a lion on the same mission scared them as soon as we scared him; then, as the sun began to sink, we made for our camp.

At that moment I had my first and only difference of opinion with Harneck. Our camp was out of sight, indeed we had no idea where Michael had pitched it. Harneck, swearing he recognized Michael's foot-prints, wanted to follow one set of tracks, I another. It seemed most unreasonable for me to be arguing with a native born and bred to tracking. But I had had my lesson on Mlanje. I preferred to be the cause of my own mistakes and I insisted on going my way. Half an hour later we came on to a rise and saw the camp, perfectly pitched on the banks of the young Rukuru.

Two nights later we camped for the last time by the magic pond, dark and tragically still under the night sky, and so full of reservations that the bearers could hardly bear to look at it.

From there we did, although I say it myself, a remarkable and praiseworthy journey into the immense and extremely difficult Rumpi valley. Our carriers were beyond praise. They did some terrible climbs, loaded to the full, through deep gorges, along vast precipices, without a man falling out, and a week later, at two o'clock in the afternoon, we climbed out of our last valley and looked down on the shimmering red roofs of the Mission at Livingstonia.

We camped that night on the road, and in the morning said good-bye to our bearers. It was the last good-bye and made me very sad. It is always like that with journeys. One is as sad at the end as at the beginning; the reward lies in between.

The bearers, too, looked depressed, and as they walked by us down the red, dusty road to their home, I thought their farewell

was deeper than usual, that ancient greeting: "We see you, Bwana! We see you."

"Aye! I see you," I called back: "I see you. Hamba Gahle. Go in happiness."

Michael stopped, suddenly tapped a cigarette impatiently on his case, lit it, looked at me and said: "And you? What will you do now? Will you ever come back?"

I said I didn't quite know. For the moment my work was over. My instinct was to get back as soon as I could to take up my own personal life where the war had interrupted it ten years before. It seemed to me by far the most important thing in the world to do: to begin trying to give to myself the wholeness, the singleness that I so wanted life and the world to have. But who could tell, I might be back. Africa was deep in me, and in the past sooner or later it had always brought me back.

I did not say so to him then, but the truth was that Africa was with me whether I came back or not. For years it has stood apart from me: a dark, unanswered, implacable question in my life. It was that no longer. I felt that I was not leaving it, but taking it with me. I might even be able to give some of it to Europe, to the Britain that had given me so much. For the sort of journey that Michael and I had just done never really ends. Where the body stops travelling, the spirit takes over the trek; but sometimes they work together and then one visits unknown, unexplored places. For me the greatest journey of all was on the move in Europe, and I wanted without delay to add what I had of singleness to it in order to help it on its difficult way.

I then had to leave Michael by the roadside with his servants already packing up. He was tired and looked thin and rather wan. For nearly a month he and I had walked and climbed from sunrise to sunset without a day's rest, and I knew he needed it. So I had volunteered to go to the Mission and telegraph for our cars.

The Mission was about eight miles away. It was a bright, sunny day and, after the Nyika, the two-thousand-foot climb up

that hill was child's play to me. At the top I turned round to look back. But there was the old familiar cloud over the top of the plateau, hiding it utterly from view.

I walked as fast as I could to a little post office that was all of a tremble in the lake-side sun. A black postmaster gave me a telegraph form and a strange, attentive look. I caught a glimpse of my face in a small mirror. It was burnt black by the sun, but was the clear, fresh colour that is never seen in the hot malarial plains.

Quickly I wrote my telegrams. The little Morse machine started ticking busily before I was finished. Among other telegrams, I sent this: "All done and hastening home."

6

The Cretan Runner

GEORGE PSYCHOUNDAKIS

(translated by Patrick Leigh Fermor)

From the moment of the German invasion of Crete to the liberation George Psychoundakis acted as guide and runner in the Resistance movement. His duties entailed immense journeys on foot, usually at full speed over some of the most precipitous country in Europe, carrying messages between towns and secret wireless stations in the mountains, humping batteries, explosives and arms, or guiding English, Australian or New Zealand stragglers or agents in disguise through heavily garrisoned areas.

Among the "non-Cretans" who are mentioned in this extract are the following (their "cover names" are given in brackets): Lt. Geoffrey Barkham (Manoli), Capt. Patrick Leigh Fermor, D.S.O., O.B.E. (Michali), Capt. Xan Fielding, D.S.O. (Aleko), Capt. Arthur Reade (Levtheri), Corporal Alec Tarves, M.M. (Little Aleko), Capt. Tom Dunbabin, D.S.O. (Yanni or O Tom), Corporal Matthew White (Matthew).

The Capture of our Wireless Operator

Time passed slowly. One day followed another and we had been at work now for thirteen months without any serious mishap with the Germans. They had been on our heels from the start, but by keeping on the move and hiding all over the place, they could never lay hands on us. But, as time

mans sent out more spies, and their knowledge of us and our hideouts increased. They would never have managed to accomplish anything without the garrulity and carelessness of certain people.

About the twentieth of November we learnt that, at nightfall on the eighteenth, the Germans had surrounded the villages of Embrósnero, Vaphé and Vrysses, arresting thirty-seven people, and, among others, Mr. Andrea Polentas, our man in Vrysses, and poor Manoli, our operator in Vaphé, and Perikles Vandoulakis.

Vangeli Vandoulakis was in the courtyard of his house in Vaphé, when suddenly he saw the Germans. He jumped over the wall into the garden. The Germans opened fire on him at once, but, in spite of the short range, he dodged the bullets and got away. Manoli, meanwhile, was encoding some messages inside the house. Hearing the command "Halt!" and the firing just outside the door, he leapt to his feet. All he managed to do before the Germans burst in was to hide the papers and cyphers in his pocket. As soon as they saw him, the Germans cried: "Ah! You are the operator!" Several of them at once stood guard round him while the others searched the house. It was completely surrounded.

Vangeli's sister Elpida happened to be indoors and, though she heard them shooting at her brother and saw them arrest Manoli, she kept her head. She saw Manoli slip the secret papers into his pocket, and, without losing a moment, she took a jacket of her brother's into the room where Manoli was under arrest. She told him to put on this coat, and helped him remove his own and put on the other. Then she went into the kitchen where she emptied the pockets and hid the papers down the front of her dress.

After searching the whole house and finding nobody else, the Germans took Manoli away with the thirty-seven other villagers they had arrested, and flung them into the terrible Jail of Ayia where Charon had set up his dark kingdom.

The moment the Germans left Vaphé with our operator, Elpida quickly took the wireless and the other incriminating things a little way off, and hid them; conducting herself, although she was a woman, with all the sense and coolness of a brave man. After dark she carried the wireless, the heavy charging-engine and the batteries to a cave outside the village, and, taking a rifle, hid within sight of the cave for over two days till her brother and her cousin, Andrea Vandoulakis of Nippos, found her and took charge. The day after the arrests the Germans returned and searched the house of Uncle Nikoli, taking up the floor to the very foundations, in search (it seems) of the wireless transmitter. Finding nothing, they broke everything in the house to bits and left.

All these doings were the work of the traitor Komninas. He lived in Vrysses and it seems he was one of the spies taken on by the Germans from before the war. He was with the Germans in Vrysses every day, and Mr. Polentas had made friends with him. He had "taken him in hand", as he put it, to get information from him about the movements of the Germans and so on. Mr. Polentas' great mistake was meeting him at all and, meeting him, not seeing through him. He used to take him to listen to Allied stations on a receiving set which he had kept hidden from the start. Probably, as time passed, he had talked to him about our transmitter at Vaphé, and our operator. The Germans knew just what Manoli looked like—that is why they said "Ah! You're the operator!" the moment they set eyes on him. So Komninas, wearing a German officer's uniform, was able to arrange the simultaneous arrest of Mr. Andrea Polentas and his god-brother and lead the way to the hiding-place of the receiving set. They went straight to the Vandoulakis's house without even a glance at any other.

In a few days' time the Germans let everybody go except Manoli the operator, Mr. Polentas and his god-brother; and on the twentieth of December they were all three led before the firing squad under the black tree in Ayia Jail, and shot.

They kept Perikles a few more days, but thanks to his skill in answering them, he was released after countless interrogations.

At the end of November 1942, or the beginning of December, a messenger came to Mr. Michali with the news that the former operator of the wireless set, Mr. Aleko, had landed again, so he set off to meet him.

Mr. Aleko arrived with another officer and a wireless operator, and they all took up quarters at a place called Gournes in the White Mountains, in the region of Karé and Kyriakosellia.

I set off at once from Alones with Mr. Michali and went to Gournes. At the bottom of the gorge there stood a little church dedicated to St. Paul and several *mytata* or cheese-huts. The newcomers had settled in the last *mytata* to the left of St. Paul's. Vangeli Vandoulakis took Manoli's set there, and work began again. The *mytata* are conically shaped like limekilns or beehives, and they are all roofed with those great flat slabs of stone that lie about the mountainside. The entrances are so small that you have to crawl in on all fours, and we all huddled together inside on soft branches close to the fire because, outside, snow was already thick on the mountain, and it was very cold. They told us the tale of their landing.

The Greek submarine *Papanikolis* brought them to the southwest coast of Selino, near Souyia, without forewarning anyone by wireless to wait on the beach to give the landing signal. The submarine stopped over half a mile from the shore, they got into a boat with all their gear, and the submarine sailed away. They tried to land but the sea was very stormy, and they struggled with the waves in the dark for several hours.

When they were close to land at last, a wave dashed the boat against the rocks. Most of their stuff went to the bottom and they had to swim for it. They were very cold when they reached land, so they tried to light a small fire among the rocks to get warm. Some villagers from nearby Koustoyerako, who happened to be close by, saw the fire and thought they must be Germans. They were all armed, so, creeping through the rocks, they stealthily

surrounded the strangers round the fire, and took aim. One of them suggested that they should get closer and find out more, just in case they were not Germans. So they crept up, and decided that they must be English, not German, as they could hear them speaking Greek now and again in their English accent. Then they approached them openly and everybody introduced himself. These villagers from Koustoyerako all belonged to the Paterakis family.

So then they took the strangers and looked after them, and sheltered them for the night, returning to the shore with them next morning to help fish up most of what they had lost the night before by diving.

When they had rested there a bit, Mr. Aleko took Manoli Paterakis with him and came to Gournes where we all met.

Mr. Aleko, Mr. Michali, the new officer Mr. Levtheri and the wireless operator talked among themselves for hours, then Mr. Aleko called me up and said, "George, I didn't forget what you asked me to bring you when I left—a good pistol and a good watch. I hear you got a pistol at the Mount Ida drop, so here is the watch."

He gave me a most beautiful Swiss wrist-watch. I took it with joy and thanked Mr. Aleko for his gift. We stayed there about three days, then I set out for Alones with Mr. Michali and Mr. Aleko. We left the wireless operator and the new officer under the care of the Kourakis family (and especially of Levtheri Kouris), all of them villagers of Kyriakosellia.

From Alones I accompanied Mr. Aleko to Priné, to a meeting with Colonel Tsiaphakis. We went *via* Velonado, heading for the Mudros gorge. But it had been raining hard and the river was in flood. So we pulled off our high boots and our breeches, and waded across. Mr. Aleko said he wanted to go by the Monastery of Rustika to greet a monk there who was a friend of his. When Rustika came in sight, he sat down to smoke a cigarette and as he smoked, an old woman came in sight, probably going from Rustika to Mudros. While she was still some distance away, Mr.

Aleko wished her good-day. The old woman at once started making the sign of the cross again and again, imploring God and all the Saints to watch over him and bring him safe home to his country, his house and his mamma, and so on.

All this surprised Mr. Aleko very much, and, when she continued on her way, still murmuring and crossing herself, he asked me if the old woman were simple or what? "Far from it, Mr. Aleko," I said, "she's very intelligent."

"Then why does she carry on so daftly?"

"Surely it's not daft to pray to God to bring you and the other English safe home?"

"But I don't look English, dressed like this, and it's not written on my forehead . . . how did she know?"

"Even if you had it written on your forehead she would be none the wiser, as I'm sure she can't read or write. She knew it because, sitting down, we ought not to have wished her good-day before she did." So I told him all our ritual about greeting, and he said, "Well, I've learnt something new today, but, Holy Virgin! it doesn't matter a bit which of us greets first in England!"

"Yes, but here in Crete it means at once that you are English. It doesn't matter who speaks first if you are both walking, but otherwise, the one who is on the move must greet first."

We went to the monastery and found his friend the monk.

This was during the fast of Advent, for Christmas was drawing near. The good monk, after greeting us, drew up chairs, produced some wonderful wine and a *mézé* of veal that he had put by against Christmas. We ate and drank our fill, thanked him, said farewell, and left, and then pushed on to Priné, where we remained two days, Mr. Aleko conferring with Colonel Tsiphakis and Mr. George Robola and his sons and all our friends there.

Returning to Alones, we found our hideout had been shifted to another place, almost five minutes out of the village. Once more the whole village was at our disposal for whatever help we

to my own village till I learnt what happened by the "Cretan Wireless", as the English called it—that is, the mouths of men. Anything that happens is blown at once through all Crete from mouth to mouth on the very same day. I went to Uncle Petraka's, and found our two wireless operators, Siphi and the new one who had come with Mr. Aleko; they had stayed on in Alones after Christmas. The new one was called Aleko too, and to distinguish him from his officer, we called them the Big and the Little Aleko. Little Aleko had stayed in our village before Christmas, so he knew the way more or less. The lair had been shifted two days before to a point half an hour above Alones in a little stone hut they built for them on the spot. There was a hole nearby which they used for the battery-charging machine. The moment they heard the firing and the Germans in the village they all climbed into this hole, and when night fell and the Germans had gone they climbed out again and "cut the mud" in the direction of our village. How they crossed the mountains in the dark and found our village is a marvel, for only one of them knew anything about the region. God must have guided them. Soon we learnt all that had happened in Alones. The Germans found a wireless battery hidden in Father John's garden. They caught Siphi, one of the priests' sons, and, when they searched him, found a letter from Mr. Michali to his father in his pocket, sent some time ago. The letter contained something incriminating, and it could easily be seen that it was written by an Englishman. They didn't arrest the priest then, but came back for him next day. Fancy thinking they would still find him there . . . ! They ransacked the entire village and searched the woods but found nothing. All their attention was fixed on the woods below the village where the set had been working two days before—they didn't bother to search above the village, except a little distance, and so didn't find the English with the transmitting set after which they kept asking. It seems that they had been well informed. They arrested everyone in the village who didn't belong there and many of the villagers, but some managed

to slip away among the heather and arbutus bushes on the way to Vilandredo.

The Aloniots, when they saw the Germans had gone (and without the English), rushed to the hideout, took all the gear and hid it in the same deep cave as the charging-engine. They were not anxious about the English, as they knew they must have found refuge somewhere. They informed us where they had hidden the stuff, and advised us to get it without delay. We had to do it by night as the Germans were still going and coming in Alones. Uncle Petraka told me to get some other chaps to help us. So I got some cousins—Marko Psychoundakis, Ioannes Psychoundakis, Petro Kokkinakis and Andrea Leladakis. We left with Mr. Michali and Yanni Tsangarakis just before night-fall. We were about eighteen altogether. Unluckily, I had put my ankle out the day before while fooling about, and could scarcely walk. Thus I could only go half-way and had to turn back, as I understood that soon I wouldn't be able to walk at all. The rest went to the hiding-place, hoisted all the stuff on to their backs and brought them for miles over the rocks to our village, in the rain and the dark.

Returning home, a slow steady rainfall overtook me on the way. I thought of all the others heavily laden and slipping about the rocks all night in the downpour and the darkness. That night I didn't leave the village to sleep in some cave as I usually did. I followed to the letter the proverb which says: "Watch your clothes and you will only lose half of them." By now my foot was in pain, and it was raining hard, so I thought I would risk it.

I bathed my foot in hot water to bring down the swelling and then fell asleep. I didn't wake up very early, as I had had little sleep these last few nights. Suddenly my *mamma* was shaking me to wake me up. "What's the matter?" I asked. "*Germans*, my child," she said. I said, "Never mind, mother, don't you be afraid. You mustn't look frightened." I got up, put on a shoe but couldn't get the other on, as my foot was still more swollen.

While I was trying, three Germans came into the house, whistling and shouting. "*Oli apano, partil!*" ("All get up, *partil!*"). My brother and sisters were asleep still, so I woke them up, as "our friends" were shouting furiously. "*Tempo! Tempo!*" (Look sharp!) When we were all ready, I said, "*Where partil?*"

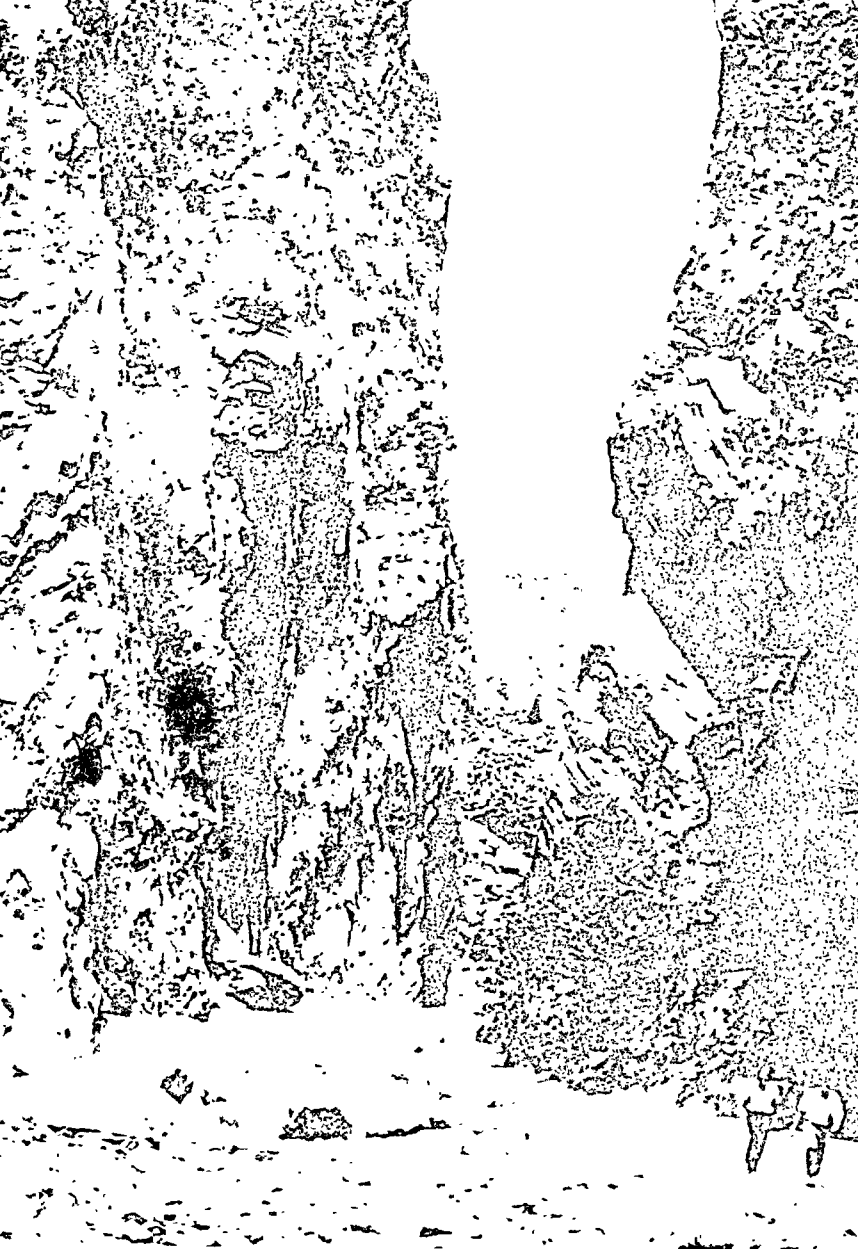
"*Klissia, Klissia* (Church), *tempo!*"

We went out quickly. I was in front, and I whispered to my parents and brother and sisters, "Fall into line, and the ones at the back, dawdle." So they made a line and our three friends followed.

By the time we had gone a short distance I was at least forty yards in front of the Germans. At that point there is a little brook beside the path. I looked back at the Germans, and, as they seemed to be looking the other way, jumped into the brook. Signalling to my family to quicken their pace, I turned my one foot into four to cover the thirty odd yards that would carry me out of sight. And, indeed, I got away without being seen, or without them noticing until they had got to the end of that narrow lane. At the end of the little river bed I climbed out at the chapel of St. George and tried to creep past, but on the other side were two German sentries. What next? I thought of hiding in the chapel, but remembered that Germans always searched churches. I thought, too, of climbing into one of the half-dug graves in the churchyard of St. George, but the Germans made regular hunts through graves after hidden arms. Standing there wondering, I saw the two Germans go into a garden in search of something. I took advantage of this by sneaking away and ran along a dried-up river bed under some plane trees in the direction of the cave. Some other Germans saw me there and ran to catch me, but I managed to dodge them among some bushes on the bank, and climbed up the side of the mountain called Koutoulóprinos.

I headed for home when they left the village at last, but was waylaid by an aunt of mine before I got there. "Run, run!" she said. "Don't go home or they'll get you!"

I learnt that they had asked for everybody's identity papers. In





ve) A secret wire-
less station



the end, failing to find the name they were after, one of them asked if there was anybody called Psychoundakis present. "Which Psychoundakis?" a cousin of mine asked. "There are lots of them." He had half-pronounced the name George when someone gagged him with his hand. They took several Psychoundakis off with them, threw them into Ayia Jui and interrogated them for three days in Canea. They asked what religion I was to them, where I was, and what work I did. They answered nothing that could harm me or even interest the Germans, and were allowed free.

Two days later a party of twenty from the Gastero came to find me, asking for me everywhere in the village. Three Gasterites took up a position outside the village with the informer who had betrayed me, in order to point me out and identify me when caught. The others arrived at the village at the double and asked the first villager they saw to point out George Psychoundakis's house.

"Which George?" he said. "There are several of the same name."

"The son of Nikolas," said the Germans.

"Ah! I don't know that one," he was about to answer, but a rain of blows fell on him. "I'll take you there," he said at last, and led them to my house. My mamma was standing outside. "That's his mother," he said, "and that's his house," then he made off before catching any more.

Some of them questioned my mother, others surrounded the house and searched it.

"Are you the mother of George Psychoundakis?" they asked.

"Which one?" she said, "there are several."

"Of George, the son of Nikolas Psychoundakis."

"Yes, I am."

"Where is your son?"

She said she had had no news of me for at least three months. I had left, she continued, to try to get a job with the Germans in Canea, as I had heard there was plenty of work going. They said

I was wanted in Retimó for interrogation, and if I didn't go there before the seventeenth of January, they would set fire to the whole village.

When they had made a thorough search without finding me, they asked for my mother again, who had gone to my uncle's house next door. A German went in and asked her—my mother herself—where my mother was. She answered that she had gone out to pick cooking-herbs on the mountainside. So they left.

Nobody had been able to make out who the traitor was, as he remained outside the village with the Germans, muffled in a raincoat and with his face covered.

This time I had been away from the village since dawn, as, when our people had brought all the things from Alones, we had hidden them near the village and taken the wireless operators off to Gournes in the White Mountains, where their colleague was. Mr. Aleko sent me with a letter to Mr. Tom, telling me to ask for him at Mr. Papadoyannis's house, as Mr. Tom had shifted again and only Mr. Papadoyannis knew where he had gone.

Reaching the Amari, I took the downhill slope from Ano Meros to the river, which I crossed by the old Turkish bridge—Manoura's Arch as they call it—then followed the river bank to where the path re-ascends to the village of St. John. Suddenly I saw Mr. Papadoyannis and his nephew Aristides Paradeisianos on the opposite bank, hiding behind the trunk of a large olive tree. Their eyes were glued to the path leading from Ay-Yanni, and although they were exactly opposite and only a little way off, they hadn't seen me yet. I realized they were on the lookout for Germans coming down from their village. As I had come in search of exactly these people, I retraced my steps to the bridge to cross over to the same bank. Looking back at them, I saw them suddenly jump up and run for cover into a dense olive grove. It needed no clairvoyance to grasp the fact that they had spotted some Germans. Although I had seen none, I started running to get over the bridge the quicker, and ran to hide in the same thick olive grove. The moment I was over the bridge, I saw half a

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the stalactites. The noise of their falling made a kind of y. He took it all as a joke with never a word of complaint, he always made us laugh when we saw him, because his es were invariably in tatters and he never washed, not even face. But one couldn't help being sorry for his woes.

Next day I left for our hideout in the White Mountains. Reaching my village I found Mr. Michali and Mr. Aleko there. They were both anxious about my absence, for I had been away some time. I told them all my adventures, and next day, with Yanni Tsangarakis as well, we all left together for the Beehive hut at Gourmes. In Vaphé we waited for it to get dark in order to move under cover of night. As we left, dusk was falling. But Mr. Aleko had a nail in one boot, his foot was in agony and he could walk no farther. He stayed in a little hut not far beyond Vaphé on a bit of land belonging to Antoni Vandoulakis. Perikles remained with him and the rest of us pushed on. Night had fallen by the time we passed through Tzitziphé, Phré and Pemonia.

Reaching Kyriakosellia, we woke up Levtheri Kouris and had something to drink, and then prepared to climb the mountain. He wanted us to sleep the night in his house, and start the climb just before daybreak. None of us agreed, although he said there was no danger. "Levtheri," I said, "I said that too, one night, and stayed in my village and next morning I was a German prisoner, though luckily I got away." He insisted no more, so off we set. By day it would have taken rather more than two hours to climb up to the Beehive. But, tired out and half-asleep as we were, we took at least double the time. Every now and then we sat down to smoke a cigarette and only the cold kept us all from falling asleep where we sat. The hideout had been moved high, high in the mountains, on the right slope of the Gourmes canyon. In spite of our hunger after this long march, we forgot all about food and lay down to sleep. But before sleep could carry away, Vangeli Vandoulakis went out of the hut for a minute.

and, coming in again, said, "There's a terrible noise of rifle and machine-gun fire down in the villages. I bet they are Germans."

All of us—Mr. Michali, Mr. Levtheri, Yanni, Sergeant Alec Tarves the signaller and Levtheris Kouris—got up at once to listen. Dawn was beginning, and we moved a bit farther up to see what was going on. All idea of sleep had vanished. It really was the Germans making a raid on the foothill villages, for soon we could see them plainly in the villages of Karès, Rhamni, Melidoni, and Kyriakosellia. We watched through binoculars and saw them far below us in the plain on the flat roofs of the houses, in the streets and all over the place. They seemed to be in large numbers. One of us remained as a look-out, the rest went to boil some tea. Before we could drink it, however, the scout ran to tell us the Germans had taken the path up our mountain; they must have had some information, for they were coming straight up.

We went out and watched them, and they were soon exactly opposite on the other side of the hollow, heading direct for our first Beehive lair at Gourmes. There were about sixty of them with three or four civilian guides. A few minutes later we heard a great noise down in the gorge. One of us went forward to see what was happening, and what should he see! Still more Germans, at least twice the amount of the first party. We let them all advance deeper along the gorge and made our plans at high speed. "The Germans are obviously after us," we said. "Everyone must scatter and hide where he can, and after the danger is past we will meet again in accordance with the situation." We then dispersed in all directions. Vangelis Vandonlekis was to remain with Mr. Levtheri, the newly arrived officer, as he couldn't move fast, to hide somewhere nearby. Mr. Michali and Yanni Tsangarakis would find a refuge higher up the mountain, and I was to climb with Little Aleko to the other side of the watershed and find somewhere to hide there. We thought that if the Germans were heading for Gourmes, they would see that we were there two days ago and begin a search. The snow higher up was

already deep, so they would be sure to come in our direction, as it was clothed by a cypress forest.

There was not a second to lose. We had no time to hide the things, so we left them piled up in the hut. If (but we didn't think they would) they returned by that path, they would find everything. For this reason we had to hide as widely scattered as possible.

I took Little Aleko and we ran. We circled the northern side, hoping to avoid the snow as our footprints might give us away. We heard rifle-fire below, and looking down, saw more Germans coming up the mountain from many points. I told Little Aleko we ought to cross to the opposite peak to get out of the German cordon. He didn't want to and hid himself under a precipice, while I pushed on to the opposite peak which a thick mist was beginning to cover up. When I reached it so much mist had fallen that I couldn't see where I was. At that moment I heard a noise of firing and explosion in the direction of our hideout, as if all Hell had been released. I thought at once that they had met some of our party and that they were shooting at each other. But what could we do—six men against at least two hundred Germans? The firing went on for five minutes, then stopped. I remained in the same place a long time, filled with anxiety about the fate of the others. The thick mist hid everything and I did not dare to move for fear of falling on top of the Germans, or over a precipice. I decided to go down and head for Kyriakosellia and find out what had happened. I took the downward slope in the mist, and almost reached the foothills. But there were Germans there too. Luckily I heard and saw them in time.

I climbed up again, and descended towards the village of Kampos, but on the way down I heard rifle-fire in the village and saw that the Germans were there as well.

I wondered what to do. Had those cuckolds captured everybody? I'll find somewhere to hide, I thought, and went up the mountain again. Meanwhile, dusk had begun to fall. I had had

sub-machine-gun there, taking good note of the place, in order to find it again easily. Then I took the Drakona pathway, and, meeting a shepherd outside the village, got into conversation. I told him I was from Alikampo in Apokoronas and that I had had some sheep stolen the night before which I was trying to find. Unfortunately the snow had started, putting a stop to my quest. I told him a thousand and two lies, asked him the news and what the Germans had been after in the village over there last night (meaning the last village I had tried to enter the night before, at dusk). He told me they had made a great search, and that he had heard they had found some guns; the same had happened at Kampos and the Germans had arrested all the men they found in the village. The shepherd had some good wine, which he gave me to drink, and he also gave me a few olives and lupin-seeds. It was the second day without food, and my appetite was ravenous. I greeted him and left. Not having time enough to go even a third of the way to Canea, I crawled into a cave, hid myself well and slept till dawn. The moment day broke I went down to the main Suda-Canea road. What do I want to go to Canea for now? I asked myself. Let's save time and see what happened to the others. In Suda I sat for a while in a coffee-shop and had just enough money with me to buy half an *oka* of oranges. Then I continued my way, reaching Tsitsiphé in the afternoon. I headed for the place called Pateloures, where we had left Mr. Aleko. I found him there and told him all our troubles, and he told me the rest were all safe. The Germans had gone to our first hideout at Gournes, but the civilian guides they had taken by force were from Karès. These men who, it seems, knew the secret, must have thought we were still there, for they took the Germans to the first cheese hut near the chapel of St. Paul. The path to the hut we were *really* in had been beaten flat through the snow with our footprints, but the Germans didn't put two and two together. They waded up to their ears to our first hut, and surrounded it on all sides. Then, firing a few mortar-bombs, they opened up with rifles and tommy-guns and charged. All they got was a pile

The Silent World

J.-Y. COUSTEAU
with FREDERIC DUMAS

Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau started goggle-diving in the Mediterranean in the nineteen thirties. As the result of his experiments he developed the aqualung diving apparatus with which a diver is able to stay submerged at depths down to three hundred feet for two hours at a time. In 1945 he founded the French Navy's Undersea Research Group and has been in charge of numerous expeditions.

In The Silent World Cousteau tells of his adventures while investigating sunken ships, his searches for "treasure below", and his encounters with many "sea-companions"—sharks, octopuses, moray eels and manta rays. This extract deals with the narrow escape of Cousteau and Dumas ("Didi") while exploring an inland water cave, the Fountain of Vaucluse near Avignon.

Cave Diving

Our worst experience in 5,000 dives befell us not in the sea but in an inland water cave, the famous Fountain of Vaucluse near Avignon. The renowned spring is a quiet pool in a crater under a six-hundred-foot limestone cliff above the River Sorgne. A trickle flows from it the year round, until March comes, when the Fountain of Vaucluse erupts in a rage of water which swells the Sorgne to flood. It pumps furiously for five weeks, then subsides. The phenomenon has occurred every year in recorded history.

The fountain has evoked the fancy of poets since the Middle Ages. Petrarch wrote sonnets to Laura by the Fountain of Vaucluse in the fourteenth century. Frédéric Mistral, our Provençal poet, was another admirer of the spring. Generations of hydrologists have leaned over the fountain, evolving dozens of theories. They have measured the rainfall on the plateau above, mapped the potholes in it, analysed the water, and determined that it is invariably 55° Fahrenheit all the year round. But no one knew what happened to discharge the amazing flood.

One principle of intermittent natural fountains is that of an underground siphon, which taps a pool of water lying higher inside the hill than the water-level of the surface pool. Simple overflows of the inner pool by heavy rain seeping through the porous limestone did not explain Vaucluse, because it did not entirely respond to rainfall. There was either a huge inner reservoir or a series of inner caverns and a system of siphons. Scientific theories had no more validity than Mistral's explanation: "One day the fairy of the Fountain changed herself into a beautiful maiden and took an old strolling minstrel by the hand and led him down through Vaucluse's waters to an underground prairie, where seven huge diamonds plugged seven holes. 'See these diamonds?' said the fairy. 'When I lift the seventh, the fountain rises to the roots of the fig tree that drinks only once a year.'" Mistral's theory, as a matter of fact, possessed one more piece of tangible evidence than the scientific guesses. There is a rachitic hundred-year-old fig tree hooked on the vertical wall at the water-line of the annual flood. Its roots are watered but once a year.

A retired Army officer, Commandant Brunet, who had settled in the nearby village of Apt, became an addict of the Fountain as had Petrarch six hundred years before. The Commandant suggested that the Undersea Research Group dive into the Fountain and learn the secret of the mechanism. In 1946 the Navy gave us permission to try. We journeyed to Vaucluse on August 24th, when the spring was quiescent. There seemed to be

no point in entering a violent flood if its source might be discovered when the Fountain was quiet.

The arrival of uniformed naval officers and sailors in trucks loaded with diving equipment started a commotion in Vaucluse. We were overwhelmed by boys, vying for the privilege of carrying our air cylinders, portable decompression chamber, aqualungs, and diving dresses up the wooded trail to the Fountain. Half the town, led by Mayor Garcin, stopped work and accompanied us. They told us about the formidable dive into the Fountain made by Señor Negri in 1936. He seemed to have been a remarkably bold type, for we were informed that he had descended in a diving suit with a microphone inside the helmet, through which he broadcast a running account of his incredible rigours as he plunged one hundred and twenty feet to the lower elbow of the siphon. Our friends of Vaucluse recalled with a thrill the dramatic moment when the voice from the depths announced that Señor Negri had found Ottonelli's zinc boat!

We already knew about Negri and Ottonelli, the two men who had preceded us into the Fountain, Ottonelli in 1878. We greatly admired Ottonelli's dive in the primitive equipment of his era. We were somewhat mystified by Señor Negri, a Marseille salvage contractor, who had avoided seeing us on several occasions when we sought first-hand information on the topography of the Fountain. We had read his diving report, but we felt deprived of the details he might have given us personally.

The helmet divers described certain features to be found in the Fountain. Ottonelli's report stated that he had alighted on the bottom of a basin forty-five feet down and reached a depth of ninety feet in a sloping tunnel under a huge triangular stone. During the dive his zinc boat had capsized in the pool and slid down through the shaft. Negri said he had gone to one hundred and twenty feet, to the elbow of a siphon leading uphill, and found the zinc boat. The corrosion-proof metal had, of course, survived sixty years of immersion. Negri reported he could

proceed no further because his air pipe was dragging against a great boulder, precariously balanced on a pivot. The slightest move might have toppled the rock and pinned him down to a gruesome death.

We had based our tactical planning on the physical features described by the pioneer divers. Dumas and I were to form the first *cordée*—we used the mountain climber's term because we were to be tied together by a thirty-foot cord attached to our belts. Negri's measurements determined the length of our guide rope—four hundred feet—and the weights we carried on our belts, which were unusually heavy to allow us to penetrate the tunnel he had described and to plant ourselves against currents inside the siphon.

What we could not know until we had gone inside the Fountain was that Negri was over-imaginative. The topography of the cavern was completely unlike his description. Señor Negri's dramatic broadcast was probably delivered just out of sight of the watchers, about fifty feet down. Dumas and I all but gave our lives to learn that Ottonelli's zinc boat never existed. That misinformation was not the only burden we carried into the Fountain: the new air compressor with which we filled the breathing cylinders had prepared a fantastic fate for us.

We adjusted our eyes to the gloom of the crater. Monsieur Garcin had lent us a Canadian canoe, which was floated over the throat of the Fountain, to anchor the guide rope. There was a heavy pig-iron weight on the end of the rope, which we wanted lowered beforehand as far as it would go down. The underwater entry was partially blocked by a huge stone buttress, but we managed to lower the pig-iron fifty-five feet. Chief Petty Officer Jean Pinard volunteered to dive without a protective suit to attempt to roll the pig-iron down as far as it was possible. Pinard returned lobster-red with cold and reported he had shoved the weight down to ninety feet. He did not suspect that he had been down further than Negri.

I donned my constant-volume diving dress over long woollens

under the eyes of an appreciative audience perched round the rocky lip of the crater. My wife was among them, not liking this venture at all. Dumas wore an Italian Navy frogman outfit. We were loaded like donkeys. Each wore a three-cylinder lung, rubber foot fins, a heavy dagger, and two large waterproof flashlights, one in hand and one on the belt. Over my left arm was coiled three hundred feet of line in three pieces. Dumas carried an emergency micro-aqualung on his belt, a depth gauge, and a *piolet*, the alpinist's ice axe. There were rock slopes to be negotiated: with our heavy ballast we might need the *piolet*.

The surface commander was the late Lieutenant Maurice Fargues, our resourceful equipment officer. He was to keep his hand on the guide line as we transported the pig-iron down with us. The guide rope was our only communication with the surface. We had memorized a signal code. One tug from below requested Fargues to tighten the rope to clear snags. Three tugs meant pay out more line. Six tugs was the emergency signal for Fargues to haul us up as quickly as possible.

When the *cordée* reached Negri's siphon, we planned to station the pig-iron, and attach to it one of the lengths of rope I carried over my arm. As we climbed on into the siphon, I would unreel this line behind me. We believed that our goal would be found past Negri's see-sawing rock, up a long sloping arm of the siphon, in an air cave, where in some manner unknown Vaucluse's annual eruption was launched.

Embarrassed by the wealth of gadgets we had hanging on to us, and needing our comrades' support, we waded into the pool. We looked around for the last time. I saw the reassuring silhouette of Fargues and the crowd round the amphitheatre. In their forefront was a young abbé, who had no doubt come to be of service in a certain eventuality.

As we submerged, the water liberated us from weight. We stayed motionless in the pool for a minute to test our ballast and communications system. Under my flexible helmet I had a special mouthpiece which allowed me to articulate under water.

Dumas had no speaking facility, but could answer me with nods and gestures.

I turned face down and plunged through the dark door. I rapidly passed the buttress into the shaft, unworried about Dumas's keeping pace on the thirty-foot cord at my waist. He can outswim me any time. Our dive was a trial run: we were the first *cordée* of a series. We intended to waste no time on details of topography but to proceed directly to the pig-iron and take it on to the elbow of Negri's siphon, from which we would quickly take up a new thread into the secret of the Fountain. In retrospect, I also find that my subconscious mechanism was anxious to conclude the first dive as soon as possible.

I glanced back and saw Didi gliding easily through the door against a faint green haze. The sky was no longer our business. We belonged now to a world where no light had ever struck. I could not see my flashlight beam beneath me in the frightening dark—the water had no suspended motes to reflect light. A disc of light blinked on and off in the darkness when my flashlight beam hit rock. I went head down with tigerish speed, sinking by my overballast, unmindful of Dumas. Suddenly I was held by the belt and stones rattled past me. Heavier borne than I, Dumas was trying to brake his fall with his feet. His suit was filling with water. Big limestone blocks came loose and rumbled down round me. A stone bounced off my shoulder. I remotely realized I should try to think. I could not think.

Ninety feet down I found the pig-iron standing on a ledge. It did not appear in the torch beam as an object from the world above, but as something germane to this place. Dimly I recalled that I must do something about the pig-iron. I shoved it down the slope. It roared down with Dumas's stones. During this blurred effort I did not notice that I lost the lines coiled on my arm. I did not know that I had failed to give Fargues three tugs on the line to pay out the weight. I had forgotten Fargues and everything behind us. The tunnel broke into a sharper decline. I circled my right hand continuously, playing the torch in spirals

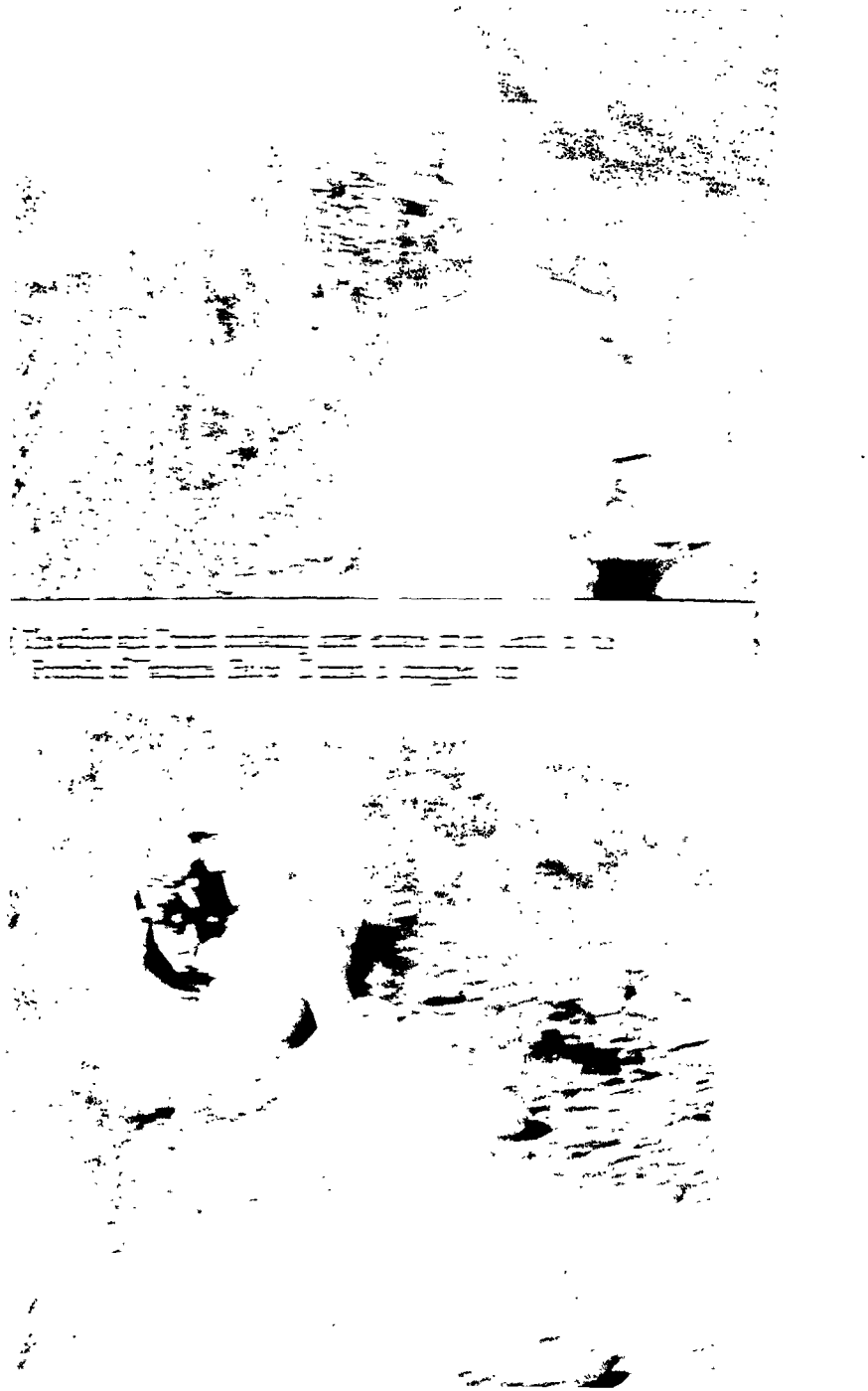
on the clean and polished walls. I was travelling at two knots. I was in the Paris subway. I met nobody. There was nobody in the Metro, not a single rock bass. No fish at all.

At that time of year our ears are well trained to pressure after a summer's diving. *Why did my ears ache so?* Something was happening. The light no longer ran around the tunnel walls. The beam spread on a flat bottom, covered with pebbles. It was earth, not rock, the detritus of the chasm. I could find no walls. I was on the floor of a vast drowned cave. I found the pig-iron, but no zinc boat, no siphon, and no precariously balanced rock. My head ached. I was drained of initiative.

I returned to our purpose, to learn the geography of the immensity that had no visible roof or walls, but rolled away down at a 45° incline. I could not surface without searching the ceiling for the hole that led up to the inner cavern of our theory.

I was attached to something, I remembered. The flashlight picked out a rope which curled off to a strange form floating supine above the pebbles. Dumas hung there in his cumbersome equipment, holding his torch like a ridiculous glow-worm. Only his arms were moving. He was sleepily trying to tie his *piolet* to the pig-iron line. His black frogman suit was filling with water. He struggled weakly to inflate it with compressed air. I swam to him and looked at his depth gauge. It read one hundred and fifty feet. The dial was flooded. We were deeper than that. We were at least two hundred feet down, four hundred feet away from the surface at the bottom of a crooked slanting tunnel.

We had rapture of the depths, but not the familiar drunkenness. We felt heavy and anxious, instead of exuberant. Dumas was stricken worse than I. I thought: *This is not how I should feel at this depth. . . . I can't go back until I learn where we are. Why don't I feel a current? The pig-iron line is our only way home. What if we lost it? Where is the rope I had on my arm?* I was able in that instant to recall that I had lost the line somewhere above. I took Dumas's hand and closed it round the guide line. "Stay here," I shouted. "I'll find the shaft." Dumas understood me to mean



I had no air and needed the safety aqualung. I sent the beam of the flashlight round in search of the roof of the cave. I found no ceiling.

Dumas was passing under heavy narcosis. He thought I was the one in danger. He fumbled to release the emergency lung. As he tugged hopelessly at his belt, he scudded across the drowned shingle and abandoned the guide line to the surface. The rope dissolved in the dark. I was swimming above, mulishly seeking for a wall or a ceiling, when I felt his weight tugging me back like a drifting anchor, restraining my search.

Above us somewhere were seventy fathoms of tunnel and crumbling rock. My weakened brain found the power to conjure up our fate. When our air ran out we would grope along the ceiling and suffocate in dulled agony. I shook off this thought and swam down to the ebbing glow of Dumas's flashlight.

He had almost lost consciousness. When I touched him, he grabbed my wrist with awful strength and hauled me towards him for a final experience of life, an embrace that would take me with him. I twisted out of his hold and backed away. I examined Dumas with the torch. I saw his protruded eyes rolling inside the mask.

The cave was quiet between my grasping breaths. I marshalled all my remaining brain power to consider the situation. Fortunately there was no current to carry Dumas away from the pig-iron. If there had been the least current, no wonder he had been lost. The pig-iron must be near. I looked for the most metal block, more precious than gold. And suddenly there it was, stolid and reassuring. Its line flew away into the dark, towards the hope of life.

In his stupor, Didi lost control of his jaw and his mouthpiece slipped from his teeth. He swallowed water and took some in his lungs before he somehow got the plug back into his mouth. Now, with the guide line beginning, I knew that I could not swim to the surface, carrying the two Dumas. The weight of at least twenty-five pounds in my vest would pull me down.

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exhaustion from the mysterious effect of the cave. We had exercised strenuously, yet Dumas was helpless and I was coming idiotic.

I would climb the rope, dragging Dumas with me. I grasped the pig-iron rope and started up, hand-over-hand, with Dumas lifting below, along the smooth vertical rock.

My first three hand-holds on the line were interpreted correctly by Fargues as the signal to pay out more rope. He did so, with a will. With utter dismay I saw the rope slackening and made superhuman efforts to climb it. Fargues smartly fed me rope when he felt my traction. It took an eternal minute for me to work out the right tactics, namely that I should continue to haul down rope, until the end of it came in Fargue's hand. He would never let that go. I hauled rope in dull glee.

Four hundred feet of rope passed through my hands and curled into the cavern. And a knot came into my hands. Fargues was giving us more rope to penetrate the ultimate gallery of Vaucluse. He had efficiently tied on another length to encourage us to pass deeper.

I dropped the rope like an enemy. I would have to climb the tunnel slope like an alpinist. Foot by foot I climbed the finger-holds of rock, stopping when I lost my respiratory rhythm by exertion and was near to fainting. I drove myself on, and felt that I was making progress. I reached for a good hand-hold, standing on the tips of my fins. The crag eluded my fingers and I was dragged down by the weight of Dumas.

The shock turned my mind to the rope again and I suddenly recalled our signals: six tugs meant pull everything up. I grabbed the line and jerked it, confident that I could count to six. The line was slack and snagged on obstacles in the four hundred feet to Maurice Fargues. Fargues, do you not understand my situation? I was at the end of my strength. Dumas was hanging on me.

Why doesn't Dumas understand how bad he is for me? Dumas, you will die, anyway. Maybe you are already gone. Didi, I hate to do it, but you are dead and you will not let me live. Go away, Didi.

I reached for my belt dagger and prepared to cut the cord to Dumas.

Even in my incompetence there was something that held the knife in its holster. *Before I cut you off, Didi, I will try again to reach Fargues.* I took the line and repeated the distress signal, again and again. *Didi, I am doing all a man can do. I am dying too.*

On shore, Fargues stood in perplexed concentration. The first cordée had not been down for the full period of the plan, but the strange pattern of our signals disturbed him. His hard but sensitive hand on the rope had felt no clear signals since the episode a few minutes back when suddenly we wanted lots of rope. He had given it to us, eagerly adding another length. *They must have found something tremendous down there,* thought Fargues. He was eager to penetrate the mystery himself on a later dive. Yet he was uneasy about the lifelessness of the rope in the last few minutes. He frowned and fingered the rope like a pulse, and waited.

Up from the lay of rope, four hundred feet across the fiction of rocks, and through the surface, a joint vibration tickled Fargues's finger. He reacted by standing and quivering, half to himself, half to the cave watchers. "What do I think? Being moved at?" With a set face he headed the signal in.

I felt the rope tighten. I jerked my head off the dagger and hung on. Dumas's air cylinders rang on the rock as we were borne swiftly up. A hundred feet above I saw a faint triangle of green light, where hope lay. It was then a minute Fargues pulled us out into the pool and leaped in the water after the rescuer Dumas. Tailliez and Pinard waited in shore as I gathered what strength I had left to control my emotions, not to break down. I managed to walk out of the pool. Dumas lay on his stomach and vomited. Our friends stripped off our robes when I warmed myself round a cauldron of heating water. Fargues and the doctor worked over Dumas. In five minutes he was on his feet, standing by the fire. I headed him a bottle of brandy. The

a drink and said, "I'm going down again." I wondered the Mayor said, "When your air bubbles stopped coming to surface, your wife ran down the hill. She said she could not find it." Poor Simone had raced to a café in Vaucluse and entered the most powerful spirit in the house. A rumour-ronger raced through the village, yelling that one of the divers had drowned. Simone cried, "Which one? What colour was his mask?"

"Red," said the harbinger. Simone gasped with relief—my mask was blue. Then she thought of Didi in his red mask and her joy collapsed. She returned distractedly up the trail to the Fountain. There stood Didi, a miracle to her.

Dumas's recuperative powers soon brought his colour back and his mind cleared. He wanted to know why we had been drugged in the cavern. In the afternoon another *cordée*, Tailliez and Guy Morandière, prepared to dive, without the junk we had carried. They wore only long underwear and light ballast, which made them slightly buoyant. They planned to go to the cavern and reconnoitre for the passage which led to the secret of Vaucluse. As soon as they found it, they would immediately return and sketch the layout for the third *cordée*, which would make the final plunge.

From the diving logs of Captain Tailliez and Morandière, I am able to recount their experience, which was almost as appalling as ours. Certainly it took greater courage than ours to enter the Fountain from which we had been so luckily saved. In the few minutes they spent just under the surface of the pool, getting used to the water, Morandière felt intense cold. They entered the tunnel abreast, roped together. Second *cordée* tactics were to swim down side by side along the ceiling.

When they encountered bumps sticking down from the roof, they were to duck under them and then return to follow the ceiling closely. Each hump they met promised to level off

beyond, but never did. They went down and down. Our only depth gauge had been ruined, but the veteran Tailliez had a sharp physiological sense of depth. At an estimated one hundred and twenty feet he halted the march so that they might study their subjective sensations. Tailliez felt the first inviting throbs of rapture of the depths. He knew that to be impossible at a mere twenty fathoms. However, the symptoms were pronounced.

He called to Morandière that they should turn back. Morandière manœuvred himself and the rope to facilitate Tailliez's turnabout. As he did so, he heard that Tailliez's respiratory rhythm was disorderly, and faced his partner so that Tailliez could see him give six pulls on the pig-iron rope. Unable to exchange words under water, the team had to depend on errant flashlight beams and understanding to accomplish the turn. Morandière stationed himself below Tailliez to conduct the Captain to the surface. Tailliez construed these activities to mean that Morandière was in trouble. Both men were slipping into the blank rapture that had almost finished the first *cordée*.

Tailliez carefully climbed the guide line. The rope behind drifted aimlessly in the water, and a loop hung round his shoulders. Tailliez felt he had to sever the rope before it entangled him. He whipped out his dagger and cut it away. Morandière, swimming freely below him, was afraid his mate was passing out. The confused second *cordée* ascended to the green hall light of the Fountain. Morandière closed in, took Tailliez's feet, and gave him a strong boost through the narrow door. The effort upset Morandière's breathing cycle.

We saw Tailliez emerge in his white underwear, Morandière following through the underwater door. Tailliez broke the surface, found a footing, and walked out of the water, erect and wild-eyed. In his right hand he held his dagger, upside down. His fingers were cut to the bone by the blade and blood was flowing down his sodden woollens. He did not feel it.

We resolved to call it a day with a shallow plunge to map the

entrance of the Fountain. We made sure that Didi, in his anger against the cave, could not slip down to the drowned cavern that had nearly been our tomb. Fargues lashed a one-hundred-and-fifty-foot line to Dumas's waist and took Didi's dagger to prevent him cutting himself loose and going down further. The final reconnaissance of the entrance shaft passed without incident.

It was an emotional day. That evening in Vaucluse the first and second *cordées* made a subjective comparison of cognac narcosis and rapture of the Fountain. None of us could relax, thinking of the enigmatic stupor that had overtaken us. We knew the berserk intoxication of *l'ivresse des grandes profondeurs* at two hundred and twenty feet in the sea, but why did this clear, lifeless limestone water cheat a man's mind in a different way?

Simone, Didi, and I drove back to Toulon that night, thinking hard, despite fatigue and headache. Long silences were spaced by occasional suggestions. Didi said, "Narcotic effects aren't the only cause of diving accidents. There are social and subjective fears, the air you breathe. . . ." I jumped at the idea. "The air you breathe!" I said. "Let's run a lab test on the air left in the lungs."

The next morning we sampled the cylinders. The analysis showed 1/2,000 of carbon monoxide. At a depth of one hundred and sixty feet the effect of carbon monoxide is sixfold. The amount we were breathing may kill a man in twenty minutes. We started our new Diesel-powered free-piston air compressor. We saw the compressor sucking in its own exhaust fumes. We had all been breathing lethal doses of carbon monoxide.

Further expeditions were made to the caves of Chartreux and Estromar which taught us much about the problems of cave diving. But we still had not gone through a siphon or the mechanism that shot water earthward. In 1948, while most of us were away on the *Bathyscaphe* expedition, three members of the group finally achieved the goal, Lieutenant Jean Alinot, Dr. F. Devilla, and C.P.O. Jean Pinard, this time assisted by the Army Corps of

Engineers. The spring of Vitarelles near Gramat was the object of their large cave expedition.

Vitarelles is a subterranean spring. The surface of the water is three hundred and ninety feet down. The engineers carried out a full-scale dry-cave operation before the divers reached the water. First the soldiers descended an air shaft two hundred and seventy feet deep, lowering pontoons, duckboards, aqualungs, constant-volume suits, lines, electric-lighting equipment, and food. From this landing they conveyed the equipment down another hole, narrow and almost vertical, one hundred and twenty feet to an underground chamber. From this base they were required to lay duckboards and pack the gear sixteen hundred feet through partially flooded galleries, including a dangerous cramped passage thirty feet long. Only then did they reach the surface of the spring, into which the divers were to continue for hundreds of feet more. The engineers established a pontoon pier in the pool, with diving ladders, and the sailors prepared to dive.

Alinot's plan was to send divers down one at a time, on safety ropes of progressively greater lengths. Using measuring lines, flashlights, compasses, depth gauges, and sketch blocks, the divers mapped the water tunnel, each one advancing further than the man before. The scheme worked smoothly, and the chart moved league by league into the void. The culminating tenth dive was made by Alinot on October 29, 1948.

The diver before him had reached the entrance to a siphon. Alinot went down, fastened to a four-hundred-foot safety line, and rapidly swam to the limit of the chart. The gallery rose at a 20° angle. Alinot swam into the narrow tunnel. He passed uphill through forty feet of rather turbid water in a darkness pierced only by his narrow flashlight beam. He felt his head part a gentle tissue and water resistance ceased. Through his mask, now blurred like a windscreen in rain, he saw that his head was in air. He was in a sealed clay vault one hundred and fifty feet long. He removed his mouthpiece and mask, and

breathed natural air. Where water flows, even in a sealed pocket beneath the earth, there is air.

He climbed out on a slippery strand that ranged down one side of the long room. He was the first living thing that ranged down one side of the long room. He was the first living thing in the vault of water, earth and air, where no sun had ever brought the gift of life. He walked along the shore, measuring and sketching, elated with the victory of our campaigns against the fountains.

At the far end, Alinot had a bitter disappointment. Plainly visible under the clear water was the aperture of another siphon: the mechanism of Vitarelles held further secrets. Alinot sat down and thought of the cost of penetrating the new labyrinth. The divers would have to transport equipment nearly four hundred feet under water to set up an advanced camp in the clay room, before they could plunge into the second siphon.

Alinot finished his sketch and walked back to the entrance, imprinting rubber frog tracks on the hidden beach. He spat in the mask and sloshed it in the water. He moulded the mask over his face and inserted the mouth grip. He slipped into the water, turned up his flukes, and sailed head down through the current of the first siphon. In a few minutes his exhalations sputtered out on the surface. Nothingness was restored in the cave. . . . The tracks of man vanished into darkness.

Man-Eaters of Kumaon

JIM CORBETT

Jim Corbett's book about the hunting of tigers in the Kumaon, in North India, has been described as a "masterpiece" deserving a place near Kipling's *Jungle Books*. It begins by glorifying—even praising—the tiger. As a rule, it is only when circumstances have diminished the tiger's speed or the effectiveness of claws and teeth—even then only by accident, that he becomes a man-eater. The book is a menace the beast there is can be seen from the curious pictures of tigers below, which led to the events described in the extract following.

PETITION

BY THE PEOPLE OF GARHWAL

From The Public of Garhi Panch, Bungi and Bickla Badalpur
From Garhwal

To (Honourable) E. Corbett, Esq., I.C.S., Kalaichungi
From Nainital

I have the

honour to inform you (of the above) most humbly and respectfully request you to take the following steps for favour of your kind consideration and doing necessary

that in this district a tiger has killed one man-eater since
the tiger has been killed and wounded a
man and a woman. By the fear of this tiger we
are not able to go to the fields and the deer have nearly
been killed and the grass nor we can

enter our cattles in the forest to graze so many of our cattle are to die. Under the circumstances we are nearly to be ruined. The Forest officials are doing every possible arrangement to kill this tiger but there is no hope of any success. 2 shikari gentlemen also tried to shoot it but unfortunately they could not get it. Our kind District Magistrate has notified Rs. 150 reward for killing this tiger, so every one is trying to kill it but no success. We have heard that your kind self have killed many man-eater tigers and leopards. For this you have earned a good name specially in Kumaon revenue Division. The famous man-eater leopard of Nagpur has been shoot by you. This is the voice of all the public here that this tiger also will be killed only by you. So we the public venture to request that you very kindly take trouble to come to this place and shoot this tiger (our enemy) and save the public from this calamity. For this act of kindness we the public will be highly obliged and will pray for your long life and prosperity. Hope you will surely consider on our condition and take trouble to come here for saving us from this calamity. The route to this place is as follows Ramnagar to Sultan, Sultan to Lahachaur, Lahachaur to Kanda. If your honour kindly inform us the date of your arrival at Ramnagar we will send our men and cart to Ramnagar to meet you and accompany you.

We beg to remain

Sir

Your most sincerely

Signed Govind Singh Negi

Headman Village Jharat

Dated Jharat

The 18th February 1933

followed by 40 signatures and 4 thumb impressions of inhabitants of Painaum, Bungi, and Bickla Badalpur Patties.

The Kanda Man-Eater

However little faith we have in the superstitions we share with others—thirteen at a table, the passing of wine at dinner, walking under a ladder, and so on—our own private superstitions, though a source of amusement to our friends, are very real to us.

I do not know if sportsmen are more superstitious than the rest

of mankind, but I do know that they take their superstitions very seriously. One of my friends invariably takes five cartridges, never more and never less, when he goes out after big game, and another as invariably takes seven cartridges. Another, who incidentally was the best-known big-game sportsman in Northern India, never started the winter shooting season without first killing a mahseer. My own private superstition concerns snakes. When after man-eaters I have a deep-rooted conviction that, however much I may try, all my efforts will be unavailing until I have first killed a snake.

During the hottest days of one May I had from dawn to dark climbed innumerable miles up and down incredibly steep hills, and through thick thorn bushes that had left my hands and knees a mass of ugly scratches, in search of a very wary man-eater. I returned on that fifteenth evening, dog tired, to the two-room Forest Bungalow I was staying at, to find a deputation of villagers waiting for me with the very welcome news that the man-eater, a tiger, had been seen that day on the outskirts of their village. It was too late to do anything that night, so the deputation were provided with lanterns and sent home with strict injunctions that no one was to leave the village the following day.

The village was situated at the extreme end of the ridge on which the bungalow was, and because of its isolated position and the thick forest that surrounded it, had suffered more from the depredations of the tiger than any other village in the district. The most recent victims were two women and a man.

I had made one complete circle of the village the following morning and had done the greater part of a second circle, a quarter of a mile below the first, when after negotiating a difficult scree of shale I came on a little nullah made by the rush of rain-water down the steep hillside. A glance up and down the nullah satisfied me that the tiger was not in it, and then a movement just in front of me, and about twenty-five feet away, caught my eye. At this spot there was a small pool of water the size of a

bathtub, and on the far side of it was a snake that had evidently been drinking. The lifting of the snake's head had caught my eye and it was not until the head had been raised some two or three feet from the ground and the hood expanded that I realized it was a hamadryad. It was the most beautiful snake I had ever seen. The throat, as it faced me, was a deep orange-red shading to golden yellow where the body met the ground. The back, olive green, was banded by ivory-coloured chevrons, and some four feet of its length from the tip of its tail upwards was shiny black, with white chevrons. In length the snake was between thirteen and fourteen feet.

One hears many tales about hamadryads, their aggressiveness when disturbed, and the speed at which they can travel. If, as it seemed about to do, the snake attacked, up or down hill I should be at a disadvantage, but across the shale scree I felt I could hold my own. A shot at the expanded hood, the size of a small plate, would have ended the tension, but the rifle in my hands was a heavy one and I had no intention of disturbing the tiger that had showed up after so many days of weary waiting and toil. After an interminably long minute, during which time the only movement was the flicking in and out of a long and quivering forked tongue, the snake closed his hood, lowered his head to the ground and, turning, made off up the opposite slope. Without taking my eyes off him I groped with my hand on the hillside and picked up a stone that filled my hand as comfortably as a cricket ball. The snake had just reached a sharp ridge of hard clay when the stone, launched with the utmost energy I was capable of, struck it on the back of the head. The blow would have killed any other snake outright, but the only, and very alarming, effect it had on the hamadryad was to make it whip round and come straight towards me. A second and a larger stone fortunately caught the neck when it had covered half the distance between us, after that the rest was easy. With a great feeling of relief I completed the second circle round the village, and though it proved as fruitless as the first, I was elated at having

flattened out for a hundred yards before going straight up three hundred yards to the ridge above. It was at the upper end of this flat bit of ground that I expected to find the kill, and with luck, the tiger. The long and difficult climb up the valley through dense thickets of thorn bush and stunted bamboo had brought out a bath of sweat, and as it was not advisable to take on a job where quick firing might be necessary with sweaty hands, I sat down for a much-needed rest and for a smoke.

The ground in front of me was strewn with large smooth boulders among which a tiny stream meandered, forming wherever possible small crystal-clear pools. Shod with the thinnest of rubber-soled shoes, the going over these boulders was ideal for my purpose, and when I had cooled and dried I set off to stalk the kill in the hope of finding the tiger lying asleep near it. When three-quarters of the ground had been covered I caught sight of the kill tucked away under a bank of ferns, and about twenty-five yards away from where the hill went steeply up to the ridge. The tiger was not in sight, and, very cautiously drawing level with the kill, I took up my position on a flat boulder to scan every inch of ground visible.

The premonition of impending danger is too well known and established a fact to need any comment. For three or four minutes I had stood perfectly still with no thought of danger and then all at once I became aware that the tiger was looking at me at a very short range. The same sense that had conveyed the feeling of impending danger to me had evidently operated in the same way on the tiger and awakened him from his sleep. To my left front were some dense bushes, growing on a bit of flat ground. On these bushes, distant fifteen to twenty feet from me, and about the same distance from the kill, my interest centred. Presently the bushes were gently stirred and the next second I caught sight of the tiger going at full speed up the steep hillside. Before I could get the rifle to bear on him he disappeared behind a creeper-covered tree, and it was not until he had covered about sixty yards that I again saw him, as he was spring-

ing up the face of a rock. At my shot he fell backwards and came roaring down the hill, bringing an avalanche of stones with him. A broken back, I concluded; and just as I was wondering how best to deal with him when he should arrive all-of-a-heap at my feet, the roaring ceased, and the next minute, as much to my relief as to my disappointment, I saw him going full-out, and apparently unwounded, across the side of the hill. The momentary glimpses I caught of him offered no shot worth taking, and with a crash through some dry bamboos he disappeared round the shoulder of the hill into the next valley.

I subsequently found that my bullet, fired at an angle of seventy-five degrees, had hit the tiger on the left elbow and chipped out a section from that bone which some cynical humorist has named the "funny bone". Carrying on, the bullet had struck the rock and, splashing back, had delivered a smashing blow on the point of the jaw. Neither wound, however painful it may have been, was fatal, and the only result of my following up the very light blood trail into the next valley was to be growled at from a dense thorn thicket, to enter which would have been suicidal.

My shot had been heard in the village and an expectant crowd were waiting for me on the ridge. They were even more disappointed, if that were possible, than I was at the failure of my carefully planned and as carefully executed stalk.

On visiting the kill the following morning I was very pleased and not a little surprised to find that the tiger had returned to it during the night and taken a light meal. The only way now of getting a second shot was to sit up over the kill; and here a difficulty presented itself. There were no suitable trees within convenient distance of the kill, and the very unpleasant experience I had had on a former occasion had effectively cured me of sitting at night on the ground for a man-eater. While still undecided where to sit I heard the tiger call, some distance down the valley up which I had climbed the previous day. The calling of the tiger offered me a very welcome chance of shooting it in

the most pleasant way it is possible of bringing one of these animals to bag. The conditions under which a tiger can be called up are (a) when rampaging through the forest in search of a mate, and (b) when lightly wounded. It goes without saying that the sportsman must be able to call sufficiently well to deceive the tiger, and that the call must come from a spot to which the tiger will quite naturally come—a dense thicket, or a patch of heavy grass—and that the sportsman must be prepared to take his shot at a very close range. I am quite certain that many sportsmen will be sceptical of the statement I have made that a lightly wounded tiger will come to a call. I would ask all such to reserve their judgement until they have tried the experiment for themselves. On the present occasion, however, though the tiger answered me, call for call, for upwards of an hour, he refused to come any nearer, and I attributed my failure to the fact that I was calling from the spot where the previous day the tiger had met with an unfortunate experience.

The tree I finally selected was growing on the very edge of a perpendicular bank and had a convenient branch about eight feet from the ground. When sitting on this branch I should be thirty feet from, and directly above, the boulder-strewn ravine up which I expected the tiger to come. The question of the tree settled, I returned to the ridge where I had instructed my men to meet me with breakfast.

By four o'clock in the evening I was comfortably seated on the branch and prepared for a long and a hard sit-up. Before leaving my men I had instructed them to cooe to me from the ridge at sunrise next morning. If I answered with the call of a leopard they were to sit tight, but if they received no answer, they were to form two parties with as many villagers as they could collect and come down on either side of the valley, shouting and throwing stones.

I have acquired the habit of sleeping in any position on a tree, and as I was tired the evening did not pass unpleasantly. As the setting sun was gilding the hill-tops above me I was roused to

kill him the confusion following on my shot would give me a sporting chance of climbing higher into the tree. Time dragged by on leaden feet, and, eventually tiring of prowling about the hillside and growling, the tiger sprang across a little ravine on my left and a few minutes later I heard the welcome sound of a bone being cracked at the kill. At last I was able to relax in my uncomfortable position and the only sounds I heard for the rest of the night came from the direction of the kill.

The sun had been up but a few minutes and the valley was still in deep shadow when my men cooed from the ridge, and almost immediately afterwards I caught sight of the tiger making off at a fast canter up, and across, the hill on my left. In the uncertain light and with my nightlong-strained eyes the shot was a very difficult one, but I took it, and had the satisfaction of seeing the bullet going home. Turning with a great roar, he came straight for my tree, and, as he was in the act of springing, the second bullet, with great good fortune, crashed into his chest. Diverted in his spring by the impact of the heavy bullet, the tiger struck the tree just short of me, and ricocheting off it went headlong into the valley below, where his fall was broken by one of the small pools already alluded to. He floundered out of the water, leaving it dyed red with his blood, and went lumbering down the valley and out of sight.

Fifteen hours on the hard branch had cramped every muscle in my body, and it was not until I had swarmed down the tree, staining my clothes in the great gouts of blood the tiger had left on it, and had massaged my stiff limbs, that I was able to follow him. He had gone but a short distance, and I found him lying dead at the foot of a rock in another pool of water.

Contrary to my orders, the men collected on the ridge, hearing my shot and the tiger's roar followed by a second shot, came in a body down the hill. Arrived at the blood-stained tree, at the foot of which my soft hat was lying, they not unnaturally concluded I had been carried off by the tiger. Hearing their shouts of alarm I called out to them, and again they came running down

the valley, only to be brought up with a gasp of dismay when they saw my blood-stained clothes. Reassured that I was not injured and that the blood on my clothes was not mine, a moment later they were crowding round the tiger. A stout sapling was soon cut and lashed to it by creepers, and the tiger, with no little difficulty and a great deal of shouting, was carried up the steep hill to the village.

The Overloaded Ark

GERALD DURRELL

The Overloaded Ark is the story of a six months' collecting trip made by Gerald Durrell and John Yealland to the great rain forests of the Cameroons, in West Africa, to bring back alive some of the animals, birds and reptiles of the region. A second reason for going was that they had "both long cherished a dream to see Africa: not the white man's Africa, with its macadam roads, its cocktail bars, its express trains roaring through a landscape denuded of its flora and fauna by the beneficial influences of civilization" but "one of those few remaining parts of the continent that had escaped this fate and remained more or less as it was when Africa was first discovered".

The Life and Death of Cholmondeley

Shortly before we left our hill-top hut at Bakebe and travelled down to our last camp at Kumba, we had to stay with us a most unusual guest in the shape of Cholmondeley, known to his friends as Chumley.

Chumley was a full-grown chimpanzee; his owner, a District Officer, was finding the ape's large size rather awkward, and he wanted to send him to London Zoo as a present, so that he could visit the animal when he was back in England on leave. He wrote asking us if we would mind taking Chumley back with us when we left, and depositing him at his new home in London, and we replied that we would not mind at all. I don't think that either

John or myself had the least idea how big Chumley was: I know that I visualized an ape of about three years old, standing about three feet high. I got a rude shock when Chumley moved in.

He arrived in the back of a small van, seated sedately in a huge crate. When the doors of his crate were opened and Chumley stepped out with all the ease and self-confidence of a film star, I was considerably shaken, for, standing on his bow legs in a normal slouching chimp position, he came up to my waist, and if he had straightened up, his head would have been on a level with my chest. He had huge arms, and must have measured at least twice my measurements round his hairy chest. Owing to bad tooth growth both sides of his face were swollen out of all proportion, and this gave him a weird pugilistic look. His eyes were small, deepset and intelligent; the top of his head was nearly bald owing, I discovered later, to his habit of sitting and rubbing the palms of his hands backwards across his head, an exercise which seemed to afford him much pleasure and which he persisted in until the top of his skull was quite devoid of hair. This was no young chimp as I had expected, but a veteran of about eight or nine years old, fully mature, strong as a powerful man and, to judge by his expression, with considerable experience of life. Although he was not exactly a nice chimp to look at (I had seen more handsome), he certainly had a terrific personality: it hit you as soon as you set eyes on him. His little eyes looked at you with a great intelligence, and there seemed to be a glitter of ironic laughter in their depths that made one feel uncomfortable.

He stood on the ground and surveyed his surroundings with a shrewd glance, and then he turned to me and held out one of his soft, pink-palmed hands to be shaken, with exactly that bored expression that one sees on the faces of professional hand-shakers. Round his neck was a thick chain, and its length drooped over the tailboard of the lorry and disappeared into the depths of his crate. With an animal of less personality than Chumley, this

would have been a sign of his subjugation, of his captivity. But Chumley wore the chain with the superb air of a Lord Mayor; after shaking my hand so professionally, he turned and proceeded to pull the chain, which measured some fifteen feet, out of his crate. He gathered it up carefully into loops, hung it over one hand and proceeded to walk into the hut as if he owned it. Thus, in the first few minutes of arrival, Chumley had made us feel inferior, and had moved in not, we felt, because we wanted it, but because he did. I almost felt I ought to apologize for the mess on the table when he walked in.

He seated himself in a chair, dropped his chain on the floor, and then looked hopefully at me. It was quite obvious that he expected some sort of refreshment after his tiring journey. I roared out to the kitchen for them to make a cup of tea, for I had been warned that Chumley had a great liking for the cup that cheers. Leaving him sitting in the chair and surveying our humble abode with ill-concealed disgust, I went out to his crate, and in it I found a tin plate and a battered tin mug of colossal proportions. When I returned to the hut bearing these Chumley brightened considerably, and even went so far as to praise me for my intelligence.

'Oooooooo, umph!' he said, and then crossed his legs and continued his inspection of the hut. I sat down opposite him and produced a packet of cigarettes. As I was selecting one a long black arm was stretched across the table, and Chumley grunted in delight. Wondering what he would do I handed him a cigarette, and to my astonishment he put it carefully in the corner of his mouth. I lit my smoke and handed Chumley the matches thinking that this would fool him. He opened the box, took out a match, struck it, lit his cigarette, threw the matches down on the table, crossed his legs again and lay back in his chair inhaling thankfully, and blowing clouds of smoke out of his nose. Obviously he had vices in his make-up of which I had been kept in ignorance.

Just at that moment Pious entered bearing the tray of tea: the

Arming himself with these he proceeded to have a little underarm bowling practice. The first I knew of this was when I heard shrill screams and chatterings from the Drills and Guenons, and dashing out I was just in time to see a rock the size of a cabbage-land in their midst, fortunately missing them all. If one of these rocks had hit a monkey it would have been squashed flat. Seizing a stick I raced down upon Chumley waving it and shouting at him, trying to appear fearsome, while all the time I was wondering what was going to happen if I tried to deal out punishment to an animal almost my own size and with twice my strength, when I was armed with only a short stick that seemed ridiculously flimsy. However, to my surprise, Chumley saw me coming and promptly lay on the ground, covering his face and his head with his long arms, and proceeded to scream at the top of his voice. I gave him two cuts with the stick across his back, and it had about as much effect as if I had tried to demolish St. Paul's Cathedral with a toothpick. His back was broad and flat, solid muscle as hard as iron.

"You are a very wicked animal," I said sternly, and Chumley, realizing that punishment was apparently over, sat up and started to remove bits of leaf from himself.

"Whoooooooo . . ." he said, glancing up at me shyly. "If you do that again I will have to give you a really good beating," I continued, wondering if anything short of a tree trunk would make any impression on him.

"Arrrrrr . . . oooo," said Chumley. He shifted forward, squatted down and commenced to roll up my trouser leg, and then search my calf for any spots, bits of dirt, or other microscopic blemishes. While he was thus engaged I called the animal off and had them remove every rock from the vicinity. Later, after giving the beast yet another talking to, I left him, and shortly afterwards I noticed him digging hopefully in the earth near his crate, presumably in search of more rocks. That night, when I carried Chumley's food and drink of tea to him, he greeted me with loud "hoo hoos" of delight, and

jogged up and down beating his knuckles on the ground. Before he touched his dinner, however, he seized one of my hands in his and carried it to his mouth. With some trepidation I watched as he carefully put one of my fingers between his great teeth and very gently bit it. Then I understood: in the chimpanzee world to place your finger between another ape's teeth and to do the same with his, is a greeting and sign of trust, for to place a finger in such a vulnerable position is a sure display of your belief in the other's friendliness. So Chumley was flattering me by treating me as he would another chimp. Then he set to and soon polished off his meal. When he had finished I sat beside him on the ground, and he went carefully through my pockets and examined everything I had on me.

When I decided that it was time he went to bed he refused to give back a handkerchief which he had removed. He held it behind his back and passed it from one hand to the other as I tried to get it. Then, thinking that the action would settle the matter, he stuffed it hurriedly into his mouth. I realized that if I gave in and let him keep the handkerchief he would think that he could get away with anything, so for half an hour I sat there pleading and cajoling with him, until eventually, very reluctantly, he disgorged it, now very sodden and crumpled. After this I had no trouble with him; if he was playing with something that I wanted I would simply hold out my hand and ask him for it, and he would give it to me without any fuss.

Now, I had known a great number of attractive and charming animals from mice to elephants, but I have never seen one to compare with Chumley for force and charm of personality, or for intelligence. After knowing him for a while you ceased to look upon him as an animal; you regarded him more as a wizened, mischievous, courtly old man, who had, for some reason best known to himself, disguised himself as a chimpanzee. His manners were perfect: he would never grab his food and start guzzling, as the other monkeys did, without first giving you a greeting, and thanking you with a series of his most expressive

"hoo hoos". Then he would eat delicately and slowly, pushing those pieces he did not want to the side of his plate with his fingers. His only breach of table manners came at the end of a meal, for then he would seize his empty mug and plate and hurl them as far away as possible.

He had, of course, many habits which made him seem more human, and his smoking was one. He could light his cigarette with matches or a lighter with equal facility, and then he would lie down on the ground on his back, one arm under his head and his legs bent up and crossed, blowing great clouds of smoke into the sky, and occasionally examining the end of his cigarette professionally to see if the ash needed removing. If it did he would perform the operation carefully with one finger-nail. Give him a bottle of lemonade and a glass, and he would pour himself out a drink with all the care and concentration of a world-famous barman mixing a cocktail. He was the only animal I have met that would think of sharing things with you: on many occasions, if I gave him a bunch of bananas or two or three mangoes, he would choose one and hold it out to me with an inquiring expression on his face, and he would grunt with satisfaction if I accepted it and sat down beside him on the ground to eat it.

Chumley had three aversions in life: coloured people, giant millipedes, and snakes. Africans he would tolerate, and he got a great kick out of attracting them within range and then leaping at them with a ferocious scream. Not that I think he would ever have harmed them; he just liked to watch them run screaming in fear. But the trouble was that the Africans would tease him if they got the chance, and Chumley would get more and more excited, his hair would stand on end, he would sway from side to side swinging his powerful arms and baring his great teeth, and then Heaven help the African who came too close.

Giant millipedes fascinated him, but he could never bring himself to trust them whole-heartedly. The giant millipede looks not unlike a thin black pudding, with a fringe of legs (a hundred

or so pairs) arranged along the underside, and a pair of short feelers in front. They were completely harmless creatures, that would glide about on their numerous legs, their feelers waving about, and liked nothing so much as a really rotten log of wood to feed on. However, their snake-like motion made them suspect in Chumley's eyes, although he seemed to realize that they were not snakes. If I placed a couple on his box he would sit and watch them for ages, his lips pursed, occasionally scratching himself. If one walked over the edge of the crate and fell to the ground, and then started to walk in his direction he would leap to his feet, retreat to the end of his chain, and scream loudly until I came and rescued him from the monster.

Snakes, of course, worried him a lot and he would get really most upset if he saw me handling one, uttering plaintive cries and wringing his hands until I had put it down. If I showed him my hands after handling a snake he would always examine them carefully, I presume to make sure I had not been bitten. If, of course, the snake slid towards him he would nearly have a fit, his hair would stand on end, he would moan, and as it got closer, throw bits of grass and twig at it in a vain effort to stop its advance. One night he flatly refused to be shut in his box when it grew dark, a thing he had never done before. When I tried to force him in, thinking he was merely playing up, he led me to the door of the crate and, leaving me there, he retreated, pointing with one hand and "hoo hooing" loudly and in obvious fear. Investigating his blankets and banana-leaf bed I discovered a small, blind burrowing snake coiled up in the middle. This was a harmless creature, but Chumley was taking no chances.

Not long after Chumley's arrival he suddenly went off his food, lost all his interest in life, and would spend all day crouched in his crate. He would refuse all drink except about half a mugful of water a day. I was away at the time, and John's frantic message brought me hurrying back, for John was not sure what the ape was suffering from, or how ill he really was. On my return I tried everything I knew to tempt Chumley to eat, for

he was growing visibly thinner. The staff was sent to search the country-side for ripe mangoes and pawpaws, and delicate fruit salads were concocted with great care by my own hands. But Chumley would not eat. This went on for nearly a week, until I was really beginning to think we should lose him. Every evening I would force him to take a walk with me, but he was so weak that he had to sit down and rest every few yards. But I knew it would be fatal to let him lose all interest in life, for once an ape does that he is doomed. One evening before I went to take Chumley for his walk I opened a tin of Ryvita biscuits and concealed a dozen or so in my pockets. When we had walked some distance Chumley sat down and I sat beside him. As we both examined the view I took a biscuit from my pocket and started to eat it. He watched me; I think he was rather surprised when I did not offer him any, as I usually did, but finished it up and smacked my lips appreciatively. He moved nearer and started to go through my pockets, which was in itself a good sign, for he had not done that since the first day he had been taken ill. He found a biscuit, pulled it out, sniffed it, and then, to my delight, ate it up. He again broached my pocket and got another, which he also ate. Altogether he ate six, and for the next four days he existed on water and Ryvita. Then came the morning when he accepted, first his cup of tea, and then two bananas. I knew he was going to be all right. His appetite came back with a rush, and he ate us out of house and home for about two weeks, and then he returned to normal. I was very glad to have pulled him round, for we were due to leave for Kumba, and he was certainly in no condition to face the journey as thin as he had been.

The day of our departure from Bakebe dawned, and when Chumley saw the lorry arrive to load the collection he realized he was in for one of his favourite sports, a lorry ride. He hooted and yelled and danced on the end of his chain with excitement, and beat a wild tattoo on his crate, making as much noise as possible so that we should not overlook him. When everything

else had been loaded his crate was hoisted on board, and then he climbed into it, hooting delightedly. We started off, and we had not gone far before the staff, all clinging to the back and sides of the vehicle, started to sing loudly, as they always did, and presently Chumley joined in with a prolonged and melodious hooting, which convulsed the staff. In fact, the cook-mate found a singing chimpanzee so amusing that he fell off the back of the lorry, and we had to stop and pick him up, covered with dust, but still mirthful. It was a good thing we were not going at any speed.

On arrival at Kumba we had put at our disposal three school-houses belonging to the Basle mission, through the kindness of the Reverend Paul Schibler and his wife. On moving in, as always happened when you made a fresh camp, there was complete chaos for a while, and apart from numerous other things that had to be attended to, there was the question of water supply. While a suitable water-carrier was being employed, furnished with tins, and told to do his job at the double, Chumley made it quite clear that he was very thirsty indeed. He was chained outside, and had already attracted a large crowd of natives who had never seen a fully grown chimp before. In desperation I opened a bottle of beer and gave him that, and to my surprise he greeted its arrival with hoots of joy and smacked his lips over the froth. The lower the level fell in the bottle the more Chumley showed off, and the greater the crowd grew around him. Soon he was turning somersaults, and in between dancing a curious sort of side shuffle and clapping his hands. He was covered with beer froth, and enjoying himself hugely. But this drunken jig caused me a lot of trouble, for it took Chumley several hours to sober up and behave properly, and it took three policemen to disperse the crowd of two hundred-odd people who were wedged round our houses, making entry and exit impossible. After that Chumley never had anything stronger than tea or lemonade, no matter how thirsty he became.

It was not long after we settled in Kumba that Sue arrived.

She was the youngest chimp I had ever seen: she could not walk, and was the proud possessor of four teeth only. She arrived in a basket out of which she peered with wide-eyed interest, sucking her left foot. How she had been kept alive by her native owner, who had been feeding her on a diet of mashed coco yam, I don't know. Within an hour she was sucking away at a bottle full of warm milk, liberally laced with sugar and cod-liver oil. When I took her out to show her to Chumley he displayed no interest other than trying to poke her in the eye with his forefinger, so my hopes of a romantic attachment faded.

To any mother who is sick of her squealing red-faced brat I would say, "Go and exchange it for a chimpanzee like Sue: she will be half the trouble and give you just as much pleasure." She spent the night in a warm basket, and the day on my bed, and there was never a murmur out of her. The only time she screamed, clenching her little fists and kicking her legs in gusts of fury, was on those occasions when I showed her the bottle and then discovered it was too hot for her to drink straight away. This was a crime, and Sue would let you know it. She had her first feed at about seven o'clock in the morning, and her last feed at midnight. She would sleep right through the night, a trick that some human babies would do well to adopt. During the day, as I say, she would sprawl on my bed, lying there sucking her thumb or foot, or occasionally doing press-ups on the edge of the bed to get her arm muscles in trim for feeding time. Most of the day, however, she just slept.

Her face, hands, and feet were pink, and she had a thick coat of wiry black hair. On her head this looked as though it had been parted in the middle and then cut in a fringe over her large ears. She reminded me of a solemn-faced Japanese doll. At first sight her tender years (or months) had rather put me off, as I felt that she would require endless attention which I had not the time to give her. But, as it turned out, she was considerably less trouble than any of the other animals. The animal staff were so captivated by her that they would fight for the privilege of giving her a

bottle, and I even found John, on more than one occasion, prodding her fat tummy and muttering baby talk at her, when he thought I was not within earshot.

Chumley was, I think, a little jealous of Sue, but he was too much of a gentleman to show it. Not long after her arrival, however, London Zoo's official collector arrived in the Cameroons, and with great regret I handed Chumley over to be transported back to England. I did not see him again for over four months, and then I went to visit him in the sanatorium at Regent's Park. He had a great straw-filled room to live in, and was immensely popular with the sanatorium staff. I did not think that he would recognize me, for when he had last seen me I had been clad in tropical kit and sporting a beard and moustache, and now I was clean-shaven and wearing the garb of a civilized man. But recognize me he did, for he whirled around his room like a dervish when he saw me and then came rushing across to give me his old greeting, gently biting my finger. We sat in the straw and I gave him some sugar I had brought for him, and then we smoked a cigarette together while he removed my shoes and examined my feet and legs to make sure there was nothing wrong with them. Then he took his cigarette butt and carefully put it out in one corner of his room, well away from the straw. When the time came to go, he shook hands with me formally and watched my departure through the crack in the door. Shortly after he was moved to the monkey-house, and so he could receive no more visitors in his private room.

I never saw Chumley again, but I know his history: he became a great television star, going down to Alexandra Palace and doing his act in front of the cameras like an old troupier. Then his teeth started to worry him, and so he was moved from the monkey-house back to the sanatorium to have an operation. One day, feeling bored with life, he broke out and sallied forth across Regent's Park. When he reached the main road he found a bus conveniently at hand, so he swung himself aboard; but his presence caused such horror amongst the occupants of the

bus that he got excited and forgot himself so far as to bite someone. If only people would realize that to scream and panic is the best way of provoking an attack from any wild animal. Leaving the bus and its now blood-stained passengers, Chumley walked down the road, made a pass at a lady with a pram (who nearly fainted) and was wandering about to see what else he could do to liven life up for Londoners, when a member of the sanatorium staff arrived on the scene. By now I expect Chumley had realized that civilized people were no decent company for a well-brought-up chimp, so he took his keeper's hand and walked back home. After this he was branded as not safe and sent back to the monkey-house. But he had not finished with publicity yet, for some time later he had to go back to the sanatorium for yet more treatment on his teeth, and he decided to repeat his little escapade.

It was Christmas Eve and Chumley obviously had memories of other and more convivial festivities, probably spent at some club in the depths of Africa. Anyway, he decided that if he had a walk round London on Christmas Eve, season of goodwill, he might run across someone who would offer him a beer. So he broke open his cage and set off once more across Regent's Park. At Gloucester Gate he looked about hopefully for a bus, but there was not one in sight. But there were some cars parked there and Chumley approached them and beat on the doors vigorously, in the hope that the occupants would open up and offer him a lift. Chumley loved a ride in any sort of conveyance. But the foolish humans misconstrued his actions: there he was full of Christmas spirit, asking for a lift, and all they could do was to wind up their windows and yell for help. This, thought Chumley, was a damn poor way to show a fellow the traditional British hospitality. But before he had time to explain his mission to the car owners, a panting posse of keepers arrived, and he was bundled back to the Zoo. Chumley had escaped twice, and they were not going to risk it happening again: from being a fine, intelligent animal, good enough to be displayed on television,

he had suddenly become (by reason of his escapades) a fierce and untrustworthy monster, he might escape yet again and bite some worthy citizen, so rather than risk this Chumley was sentenced to death and shot.

Land Below the Wind

AGNES NEWTON KEITH

Land Below the Wind is a literal translation of the native Malayan term for Borneo. The American-born wife of an Englishman, Agnes Newton Keith accompanied her husband, who was the Conservator of Forests and Director of Agriculture, to North Borneo in 1934 and returned to the United States in 1939.

Many adventure stories deal with the travels of "civilized" people in "uncivilized" parts of the world. Here the reverse is the case. The following extract is mainly an account of New York seen through the eyes of Saudin, a member of the Murut tribe from the interior of North Borneo.

Agnes Keith has written a sequel, *Three Came Home*, in which she tells of her return to Borneo at the outbreak of war, of her life in prison camps under the Japanese invaders, and the eventual liberation of the country after three and a half years of occupation.

One can pay back the loan of gold, but one dies for ever in debt to those who are kind—so says a Malay proverb. In Borneo we must be both debtors and creditors, for there is much here which money cannot buy.

There is a hotel in Sandakan, and there is also a Government Civil Hospital. The hospital charges one dollar per day less than the hotel, furnishes better meals, offers the use of modern plumbing and the attention of nurses and doctors. It is my experien

that people go to the hospital with less complaint than they go to the hotel.

When guests come to North Borneo not only their housing but their transportation usually becomes the responsibility of the people who are resident here. There are 124 miles of railroad track, including sidings and switches, in the entire state of North Borneo. This railroad connects Jesselton on the west coast with Melalap, towards the interior. There are 102 miles of metalled roads in the entire state, of which roadage Sandakan, the capital, boasts as its own about seventeen miles. Consequently we do not take buses and streetcars when we travel in North Borneo. We go in either launches or small native-manned boats up the rivers, or walk through the jungle, or if there is a bridle path, and there usually is not, we may ride small native ponies from the like of which my own feet dangle almost to the ground. These forms of travel are not only slow but they require that we transport our living accommodations with us, which necessitates the employment of native *kulis* who carry the luggage on foot. The arrangements for these carrying *kulis* are best made through the auspices of the Government, as the natives are not enthusiastic about carrying luggage even although paid to do so. Consequently the travel of visitors in the state of North Borneo is almost entirely dependent upon the co-operation and personal assistance of the Government.

Borneo is frequently visited by expeditions both popular and scientific. Until recently little scientific work has been carried out here, and the island is of growing interest to students of anthropology, ethnology, zoology, and geology. These visiting expeditionaries fall into two groups—those who take care of themselves, and those whom we take care of. Osa and Martin Johnson were the shining examples of visitors who took care of themselves, and who left many of us in debt to them for their kindness.

For some months whenever I opened an American pictorial I would come upon the picture of our refrigerator surrounded by

Osa and seven Muruts eating ice cream. The text of the pictures would advise me that this well-known brand of kerosene-burning refrigerator had manufactured ice for the pagans of North Borneo, and added ice cream to the diet list of the head-hunters.

Retired from public life now, the refrigerator stands in our pantry and relaxes comfortably into middle-aged obscurity. It is a valued and respected member of the community, but its day for the headlines has passed. In our home it has never produced the same ice cream which it did under Osa's hand, for there isn't the same fine enthusiasm in my touch. Osa, who had a way with food, and whose camp pantry made my home godown look like scraps from the rich man's table, did things with a magnificent gesture. I have never forgotten the size of the soda biscuits on which we ate caviar, sitting on camp-stools in their jungle camp at Abai.

Abai Camp (known as Johnsonville) was created by the Martin Johnsons in 1935 as a headquarters for the moving pictures they made of the Borneo jungle. The camp was on the Kinabatangan River, about fifty miles from Sandakan. They cleared the jungle there and built a small village, with its own electric light plant, half a dozen bungalows, and vegetable and flower gardens planted by Osa. There the Johnsons, the film sound engineer, the airplane pilot, half the unemployed of Sandakan, and all the animals obtainable by capture or purchase in North Borneo or Malaya, spent almost a year.

The animals were everywhere, either in cages or loose, according to their supposed state of amiability. Osa was always being chewed up by various ones because she would embrace them without paying attention to the animal's mood. Osa, with her cheek against a large Siamese ape, tickling it and saying "Koochi-koochi-itsy-bitsy-muvver's baby!" telling Martin what to do about a reel of film, shouting to the cook how to mix the butter in the cake, and telling me that she was going to buy a mink coat as soon as she arrived in New York, while the ape was obviously making up his distracted mind to wallop her one—Osa was a

awesome sight. She was completely without fear of the animals, and sometimes, I thought, without discretion. However, she was the one to get bitten, and she never complained.

One day at Abai they were photographing five orangutans in an artificially erected tree in camp. A boy stood beneath the tree with the end of an electric cord which was wired to carry a slight charge of electricity. When the orangutans grew restless in the tree and started to climb down, the boy would reach up and shock them with the wire. At each success the boy gained confidence and the orangutans lost it.

Finally the largest and most influential of them decided to be fooled with no longer, and began a determined descent. The boy climbed up the tree toward him, not realizing that the wire must be grounded on earth to carry the electrical charge. When he reached the orangutan he found he was tickling the angry beast with a powerless piece of wire. The orangutan pushed the boy out of the tree, and came angrily down.

We all, with the exception of the airplane pilot, ran for one of the bungalows. For the pilot the orangutan had developed a demonstrative and somewhat maudlin affection. When the pilot stood his ground and reached a hand out for the ruffled beast, the orang meekly took the hand and walked beside him with a sheepish expression on his face which seemed to say, "I just can't explain it, fellows! Love must be experienced to be understood."

The last thing I heard that night as I walked down the path from the dining house to the sleeping bungalow was Mr. Johnson calling after me, "Wait for the boy with the lantern! The hamadryads sometimes get out of their cages and sleep on the path at night."

Before the Johnsons moved the animals from Sandakan to Abai, the reptiles were kept in small cages. Word went around town that the Johnsons were buying rats to feed to the hamadryads. That night a feast was brought in, and an especially fine Borneo rat was placed in the cage of the largest hamadryad. The next morning the hamadryad was found dead with a

through his back, and the rat was alive and hearty. The cage had been so small that the reptile could not move freely enough to catch the rat.

The last afternoon the Johnsons were in Sandakan they came to our garden to try to make a sound record of the song of Anjibi, our large female ape. Martin said that he had had difficulty in obtaining a record of the song of the gibbon apes, as they will not sing in strange surroundings, or if they are terrified. Ordinarily with the coming of the first morning sun our Anjibi may be heard all over Sandakan. But that afternoon, with an opportunity to sing a song which would be heard all over the world, she sulked shyly and refused a note. I do not now know, as we have not seen Martin's film in Borneo, whether his sound track did ever produce that lovely jungle song which is so haunting and so wild.

Osa was the most generous person I ever knew, and when she and Martin left Borneo our pantry was swollen with American delicacies of bottled watermelon pickle, maple syrup, popcorn, corn meal, California ripe olives, and Boston clam chowder, and my dressing-table had Fifth Avenue beauty creams and lotions such as it had never seen before.

Martin's words were, "My time is money; I pay for speed," which is an iconoclastic idea in the tropics. Naturally they upset all Borneo standards for the treatment of servants and helpers. Martin would swear at them and threaten to beat them up at one moment, and write gift cheques for them the next. When in Sandakan Osa showered clothing on the female servants; she let the amah iron in the living room and hang the washing on the front verandah; she wore a zebra-striped silk dress to Government House and stood in the middle of the drawing-room there and brayed like a zebra, and everybody liked it.

The Johnsons' plane was the first to fly regularly in North Borneo. They were fearless in its use themselves, and generous in giving guest flights to the rest of us. Everything about the two of them was big, except Osa's physical stature.

They were two rare and real human beings; I think they would be recognized as such in any place, and certainly they were so recognized in Sandakan.

When the word came by radio that Martin Johnson had been killed in an airplane accident his old servants came to us for verification of the news. No written tribute could have said more for him than their repeated words, "He was so good to us."

One Sunday shortly after we had received the broadcast of Martin Johnson's death I was engaged in the struggle with home mail when Arusap interrupted me to say that Saudin had returned from my country with news of its strange doings. We called him in, and Harry and I spent all morning listening to his comments about what he had seen.

Saudin is an aborigine of North Borneo, and a member of the Murut tribe of native hill people, one of the twenty-odd tribes of Borneo natives. He comes from Kampong Ambual, a Murut village in the interior which harbours about thirty of his people. Isolated from coastal contact with civilization, Kampong Ambual is self-supplying and self-sufficing. Saudin has lived most of his life in this small hamlet, where his experience of sophistication has been at worst a mild carousal induced by too much native-made rice beer during the harvest season.

A few years ago Saudin came to Sandakan, and, his reputation being excellent, he was here employed by the Johnsons to take care of the wild animals captured or purchased by them for their film. Saudin later accompanied the expedition on its return trip to the United States as a caretaker to the animals on the voyage, and remained in New York for three months in the Johnsons' charge.

When Saudin came up to our bungalow in Sandakan to tell us of his adventures in the outer world he had put away his store clothes and returned again to bare feet and singlet and brief cotton trunks. His manner retained its old native courtesy, and his attitude in presenting his tale of America was that of a Marco

Polo who scarcely expects his words to be believed. Saudin told us his story speaking in Malay, which is not the Murut tongue, but is the language most generally used in Borneo. For such words as "elevator" and "Central Park Zoo" we have no local equivalent, but Saudin had gathered the English words into his vocabulary with unconscious erudition.

I tell the story, as nearly as possible in translation, in Saudin's words.

Saudin Speaks: When I came to Sandakan from Kampong Ambual, I thought that Sandakan was a big place. But when I went from Sandakan to Singapore, I thought *that* was a very big place, probably the biggest place there was. At the great size of Singapore I was not surprised, because many Malays come to Borneo from there and tell much about it. Then we went from Singapore to Capetown, and that was even more mighty. So I asked men, was America as great as that? And men answered me that it was even greater. And now that I return to Borneo from America I think that Sandakan is only as big as the end of my little finger.

We left Singapore on a very big boat. White men did the work of natives on this boat, and spoke a language which was not English. We sailed to Colombo, a place I did not know of before, but a very fine place indeed, and I bought bananas and coconuts and ate them there. Then the boat sailed on again and we came to India. I did not see very much of India because the animals were sick and I was busy taking care of them. Sally, one of the orangutans, was very sick in her stomach and everything she ate came out like water, and she died. So I could not go into India, but I think it is only a small place, probably like Kudat, and that all the natives had come down to meet the boat.

After India we sailed on farther and farther, and the waves became very tall, and the captain said to tell men that a storm was coming. I saw black mountains ahead, and I said, "We are running into mountains!" But men said, "No, that is fog." And it was fog. In that fog we met a very cold climate, and taller and

taller waves, and a stronger and stronger storm. The boat threw itself from side to side for many days. I was very sick, and the animals were very sick, and nine small monkeys died, and the orangutan from Kudat died, but I did not. But I was very glad when we arrived at Capetown, which is Africa.

In the distance I could see that Capetown was white and shining, and the only thing that I knew that was like that was the stone-water that white men use and call ice. So I said, "There is ice on everything there!" But men said, "No, that is the houses and the streets shining in the sun." And so it was.

Mr. Johnson took me to land at Capetown, and there the man said I could not land because I was Chinese. I said I was not Chinese, I was Malay. Then I could land. But always it was like this and men would think that I was Chinese. I never told men that I was a man of the Muruts because it seems that nobody knows about Muruts, but all people know about Chinese. So I said I was Malay because some people know about Malays.

In Capetown it was a very cold climate, and both the animals and I shivered. I had a shirt and trousers and this is a great deal for a Murut to wear, but it was not enough. Mr. Johnson asked me if I had any more clothes, and when I said no he took me to a store and bought me many clothes. He bought me shirts and trousers, and short coats, and a very long black coat which hung down to my feet and had big shoulders and was very handsome, and a hat and nine neckties. He told me that I must close my shirt and tie up my necktie around my neck when I was in Capetown, as this is the custom there. All my new clothes cost nineteen pounds, nine shillings, and sixpence.

We left Capetown and the ship sailed on until we came to Dakar, which is also Africa, but is very hot. So I said to men, "Why is it so cold in one place and so hot in another place?" And men said, "Well, because it just is that way." So I said, "Yes, probably that is just the way it is."

This time we were on the ship many days, and then we came to America. When we were going to land the customs man said

to me, "You are Chinese; you cannot land." So Mr. Johnson said, "No, he is Malay, and I will send him back to Borneo in three months." The customs man said, "Can you speak English and read and write?" I said, "Yes, a little." He said, "Read this," and handed me my passport. I could not read it, but I remembered what was on it, because Mr. Johnson had told me, and I said what was on it to the man. Then the man said, "O.K. Come into America!"

So we entered into America and went to a very great village with a thousand thousand lights. It was night when we arrived, but when I looked up at the sky above this village it was very bright and red and sparkling and there was light everywhere. And I said, "Is this morning?" And they said, "No, this is New York!"

I was so astonished by New York that I just wanted to look and look and look at it. I forgot all about feeding the animals and my work. Every night men had their names put in the sky with bright lights so that they would not be forgotten, because there are so many people in New York that it would be easy to forget some of them. All the time there was a great noise made by motor cars and buses and trains. There were trains above me on bridges, there were trains below me, and there were more trains that were below the trains that were below. Always the trains were very full of people, I think if the trains all stopped and the people got off them there would be no space in New York for all the people. So the people take turns living in the trains. I used to walk and walk because I was afraid to get on those trains to ride, as I did not know how to get off or where I should be when I did, or if I might have to live on one.

The streets were very clean. They washed and polished them every morning. I thought there could be no sickness there with everything so clean.

The buildings were very tall. Sometimes I had to go up and down in what men call an elevator. This is a little room that you get into, and very suddenly it goes up. And when it stops your

stomach does not stop. But when it goes down you feel that everything has gone out of you. It is much worse than an airplane. I was always afraid in it, but said nothing, because I thought men would say, "He is just a jungle man!"

In winter there is a very cold climate in New York. Often I shivered and was cold although I wore many clothes and my handsome black coat. All men wore heavy clothes and coats like mine which hung down to their knees. But truly I was astonished at the women! They did not wear many clothes except around their necks, where they wore the skins of animals. They wore very little under this, because the wind would show me. Their stockings were just like nothing. Truly I was astonished that they did not feel cold.

In New York we put Mr. Johnson's animals in Central Park Zoo, and I went there every day to take care of them. At first Mr. Johnson went with me so that I would not be lost, and later I could go alone. But I was always afraid of the motor cars. I walked a great deal, up and down the same street and never far away, as I was afraid of being lost. At night I did not go away at all, because when lights were in the sky all things became different and I was confused.

One day he told me to go to a cinema. When I went it was daylight, but when I came out it was dark. It was only five o'clock and in my country that is still daytime. But in New York in winter that is night time and the lights are on. Then I looked up. I could see nothing but very tall buildings and a red glow at the top of the buildings, and no sky. All men were hurrying from here to there, all trains made noises, all lights blinked, and I became confused. I walked and walked, but could not find the place where I lived. Mr. Johnson had written a letter for me telling who I was and where I lived in case I should be lost some day. And, as I was lost then, I looked in my coat, and was much astonished to find that the letter was lost also.

I went to a policeman and asked him how to go to Central Park Zoo, because if I could find that I could find my home.

which was near it. The policeman said it was twelve blocks away, so I said, "Thank you very much," and walked on some more. Then I asked another policeman and he said nine blocks farther, and I walked some more. But the next policeman I asked said, "Here is Central Park Zoo!" And there I was at the Zoo, but I did not recognize it with the lights on. So then I found my house, which I think was very good fortune, because I had indeed been lost.

One day newspapermen came to talk to me, and they said, "Do you like New York? What do you like the best?" And I said, "Yes, I like New York, and I like best the red electric light signs that run like streams of fire, and the lights that chase each other around like small animals."

One day I was out walking and I came to a large place with many horses in it. I said to a man with a uniform, "Can I enter?" And he said, "You must buy a ticket." I said, "I will buy a ticket. Now can I enter?" And he said, "Sure!" So I entered and I saw large and wonderful horses, and handsome men with beautiful coloured uniforms. They played music and the horses danced to the music. I think the horses in New York are smarter than are the policemen in my country. So I struck my hands together the way people did, with astonishment and joy. When the playing was finished all the people wanted to leave at once in a great hurry, and everybody pushed everybody and I fell down. A man picked me up, and I said, "Thank you very much," and went home.

I went also to see boxing and wrestling. Boxing is all right, but wrestling is too rough. In my country we do not act like that unless we wish to kill men.

One day a man fell down in the streets and lay there wounded. Everybody just looked at him and walked on. So I looked at him and walked on too, because I was afraid if I stayed near him people would think that I had wounded him. Afterwards I told Mr. Johnson and he said, "People get killed here every day!"

I was out walking one day and met a man who was drunk, the

same as a man is in Borneo when he drinks too much rice beer. The man said, "You are a Filipino like me!" I said, "No, I am a Malay." He said, "No, you are a Filipino!" I said, "You are drunk. You had better go home. Don't you know that people get killed here every day?" But he didn't go home, and he wanted to fight me because I wasn't a Filipino. So I ran and stood by an important man in a uniform who stood at the door of a hotel. I stood very close to this important man, and as he wouldn't let the drunken Filipino come to the hotel he couldn't fight me.

Mr. Johnson took me to eat at a place where you put money in a hole and take out a plate of food. The different holes have names on them to tell you what foods are concealed within. We had vegetable and potato and meat all cooked together in a flour wrapping which they call a pie. I think this place was very cunning indeed, because the hole to receive a ten-cent piece was so small that you could not put in a five-cent piece, and the hole for the five-cent piece did not answer if you put in a one-cent piece.

One time a man gave me some wine to drink. I drank a little, and then I remembered about the many motor cars and trains outside, the great noise and confusion, and the people who got killed there every day. And I was afraid I might be hit, lost, or killed if I drank any more, so I didn't drink any more.

Mr. Johnson took me to a club where they were going to talk to people about Borneo. When we arrived he told me that I must stand up and talk to them in Malay. I said that it was useless for me to do so, because they did not understand Malay. But he said that I must speak in Malay and then he would tell them in English what I said. I was afraid and ashamed because there were many people there and I am not practised in speaking to many people. But although I shivered as with cold, I talked, and I told them about my village with only thirty people in it, which was so small that I was astonished that they wished to hear about it. And when I finished they struck their hands together to show that they were pleased, and I sat down and Mr. Johnson talked.

He showed them a roll of his film about the birds'-nest caves at Gomantong, and the proboscis monkeys, and the walking fish. Afterwards people came up to me and said, "We liked what you said tonight. What did you say? Was that Chinese you were speaking? Are you Chinese?" So I said, "No, I am Malay. Thank you very much."

Mr. Jim, who used to drive the flying-ship in Borneo, was in New York too, but he did not live there. One day we flew from New York to his home in a very large flying-ship, much larger than Mr. Johnson's, with many people in it. I was not afraid because I was used to flying before, but it was very different from flying over Borneo. In my country I looked down on jungle trees and rivers of which I am not afraid, but here I looked down on buildings and trains which would be difficult to fall upon with comfort. In New York there were snow and ice on the wings of the flying-ship. It was very rough weather, the same as on our boat before coming to Capetown, and I was sick, but I did not vomit. We went many miles before coming to Mr. Jim's village, but I do not remember the name of this village. We went into his house and his people gave us food and drink. But I was ashamed to eat with them because I did not know how to eat the food cleverly as they did, because all my life in my country I was accustomed to eat with my fingers. It is difficult to carry the food with those small weapons to the mouth. I did not wish to be rude by not eating the food after their custom, so I pretended I was not very hungry, and I went to bed soon. The next day we returned to New York.

One day Mrs. Johnson came to the hotel to take me to talk to some women. I was following after her, but for one minute I looked away and when I looked back I couldn't see her. Then I saw her again and followed her until she turned upon me with anger. Then I saw it wasn't Mrs. Johnson, but a strange woman. So I feared I was lost again, but Mrs. Johnson ran after us and she said to me, "Why do you not follow me?" I said, "I thought I was following you, because this other woman looks just like

you." And Mrs. Johnson looked at her and said, "Humph! I don't think so!"

For two weeks I was sick. They took me to the hospital, but I didn't stay there because I was afraid to, as people were dying there. So I got up from the bed and walked back to my house and I was sick there. My bowels were like water, because I had dysentery. The doctor came to see me many times and after two weeks I was well.

One day Mr. Johnson said to me that in two days he must put me on a ship to return to Borneo. I was very sad to hear this because he was very good to me, and America was so astonishing. I cried like a child and I couldn't eat anything. First I thought that I would stay in America and work, but the next day I thought, "Well, never mind, if he says I must go, I will go."

This was the day before the New Year and he bought me a watch for a present. I went to Times Square that night to see the New York people make a holiday. There were so many people that I was frightened and wanted to return to my house. I could not return because we were like fish caught in a fish trap. Men blew things in my ears that made the noise of goats. I said to them, "Don't do that!" And they said, "Don't you like that? Don't you do this in your country?" And I said, "No!" I wanted to go home to bed, but I couldn't go home all that night, I couldn't go home until one o'clock in the morning, because it was New Year in New York and you can't go home on New Year in New York.

That was the first day of the first month, and I was sad because I had to sail for Borneo that day. Mr. Johnson took my hand and said "*Selamat belayar*" in Malay, and I said "Good-bye" in English, which I think was polite. Mrs. Johnson took me to the Dutch ship *Kota Djandi*, and I felt so sad to leave them that I forgot to take my two blankets, two pillows, and my rubber shoes, but I remembered my nine neckties and my big hat and my black coat.

So I sailed for home, and when the ship arrived at Singapore

I took a letter to a man there from Mr. Johnson. The man took the letter, and after he read it he said, "Don't you know that this man is already dead? He fell in a flying-ship many days ago, and he is already dead."

And I just looked at him and I could not talk at all because I felt so sad and terrified. I could not believe that it was so. But I asked many men, and all men answered me that this was true. Then I cried like a child for two days and could not eat or sleep. And now I know my heart will always be sad for this man.

Now I will go back to my village and see my people. I will buy more buffaloes and plant more rice. When the harvest season comes I will harvest my rice, and I will drink rice beer and take a wife. But although I will live as all men do here, never will I forget America.

